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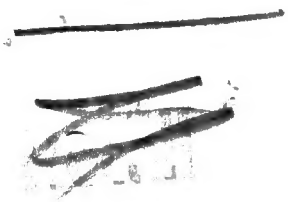

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DEMOCRACY

AND

THE PARTY SYSTEM

IN THE UNITED STATES

A STUDY IN EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

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DEMOCRACY

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THE PARTY SYSTEM

IN THE UNITED STATES

A STUDY IN EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

BY

M. OSTROGORSKI

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1910

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blies appears here for the first time. The concluding chapters have been largely rewritten, and many pages of new material will be found there.

While the scholar must still be referred to M. Ostrogorski's larger work in two volumes, the student and the general reader will find in the present book all the data, with the full discussion of this great subject, which the author has introduced into political literature.

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DEMOCRACY

AND

THE PARTY SYSTEM

IN THE UNITED STATES

A STUDY IN EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

THE American Constitution has been for long a subject of admiration. Indeed, seldom has a people found amid the tempest which usually accompanies the establishment of liberty and independence leaders as sagacious and acute as were the founders of the Constitution of the United States. They knew history, they understood man, they fathomed the great political thinkers of the age, they gauged the noble as well as the petty passions which gave themselves free play during the period of the painful beginnings of the new nation. But they could not foresee the destiny of their country, they had no idea of the course along which it was to be carried by its economic evolution. Their work, therefore, has not altogether stood the test of time. The political and social evolution of the United States has rendered some parts of it obsolete. The Fathers did not anticipate the flood of Democracy rising above the gates erected, nor the all-pervading development of Party, nor the coming of conquering Plutocracy.

These factors—Democracy, Party, and Plutocracy—taken together completely altered the direction of government and went far to reduce the Constitution of the United States to a paper constitution. Extra-constitutional forms developed, which have frequently superseded or encroached upon the constitutional order. It is impossible to understand the American government unless one has studied well those extra-constitutional forms. Nor is such study

necessary only for more accurate knowledge. The constitutional mechanism itself would work in the wrong way or would revolve in empty space if the extra-constitutional machinery superimposed on it were ignored. The citizen who is supposed to propel that mechanism would fail in his task, to the great injury of himself and of the commonwealth.

Therefore it is not only the student but the citizen too, the American citizen, who must study, along with the constitutional government, the extra-constitutional system. Its body and soul are to be found in the parties with their elaborate organization, which has grown gradually and almost concurrently with the Union. The evolution of the party system and its actual working become therefore the subject to be studied, and to this the present volume is devoted.

FIRST CHAPTER

THE FIRST PARTY ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

Beginnings of extra-constitutional organizations.

1. THE germs of American extra-constitutional organization are to be found in the clubs of the colonial period, which flourished mostly in Boston. These clubs, originally of a social character, became on the approach of the American Revolution a centre of political discussion, and very soon of political action too. Among the Boston clubs a conspicuous place was taken by the Caucus Club. The origin of this odd name, which had such an extraordinary future before it, is still a moot point for the learned.[1] In the more or less secret meetings of the Caucus Club public affairs had long been a subject of discussion, whether current business before the colonial Assembly, or, and especially, local

[1] According to some the term "caucus" is supposed to come from the Algonquin Indians, from the word *kaw-kaw-was*, which in their language meant to talk, to give advice, to instigate. Another theory derives "caucus" from the English word "calker" or "caulker." According to some it referred to the caulkers in the Boston dockyards, who, when seeking redress against the English soldiers with whom they came in conflict, held meetings, at which, as it would appear, delegates were chosen to bring their grievances before the authorities. According to others the nickname of "caucus" has been given to private gatherings of politicians in Boston by a modification of the word "caulker," because they held their meetings in the *caulker's club* or in a room which had formerly been used as a meeting place for the caulkers.

The Legislative Caucus.

3. The parties before long found a permanent basis for their extra-constitutional existence in the constitutional fabric itself — in the State Legislatures and then in the Congress of the United States.

For the elective offices bestowed in each State by the whole body of its voters, such as the posts of Governor and Lieutenant-Governor or the functions of presidential electors, a preliminary understanding as to the candidates could only be suitably effected in a single meeting for the whole State. But to organize such general meetings was by no means easy in ordinary times, both on account of the means of communication in those days, which made a journey to the capital of the State a formidable and almost hazardous undertaking, and of the difficulty of finding men of leisure willing to leave their homes for the discharge of a temporary duty. However, men trusted by the voters of the State were already assembled in the capital as members of the Legislature. Were they not in the best position for bringing before their constituents the names of the candidates who could command the most votes in the State? Acting on this idea the members of the State Legislatures laid hands on the nomination of the candidates to the State offices. The members of both Houses belonging to the same party met semi-officially, generally in the legislative building itself, made their selections, and communicated them to the voters by means of a proclamation, which they signed individually. Sometimes other signatures of well-known citizens who happened to be in the capital at that moment were added, to give more weight to the recommendation of the legislators.

This practice of recommending candidates for the State rapidly became general in the whole Union. After 1796 it appears as a settled practice in all the States. The electoral body acquiesced in it with a fairly good grace. The Legislature, after all, represented the most important elements of that body; it had a plentiful share of the men of the old "ruling class" who were still regarded as the natural leaders of society, and by the side of them an ever-growing proportion of young politicians thrown up by the democratic leaven which was continuously agitating the country. The private character of the semi-official meetings in question held by the members of Legislatures got them the nickname of Caucus, by analogy with the secret gatherings of the Caucus started at Boston before the Revolution. The name of "Legislative Caucus" became their formal title in all the States.

The Congressional Caucus.

4. A similar institution was soon founded within the Congress itself. For some time past the Federalist members of Congress, and the Senators in the first place, had been in the habit of holding semi-official meetings, to which the familiar name of caucus was applied, to settle their line of conduct beforehand on the most important questions coming before Congress. The decisions arrived at by the majority of the members present were considered as in honour binding the minority, and thus imparted to their confabulations a moral authority and almost a legal title. At the approach of the presidential election of 1800 the members of the Federalist party in Congress seized upon a matter which was entirely beyond the competence of Congress; they undertook to nominate the candidates for the Presidency

and the Vice-Presidency of the Union, and endeavoured through their personal influence to get them accepted by the Electors. The Caucus wrapped all its proceedings in profound secrecy. It provoked, nevertheless, the protestations of the opposition, which denounced the "Jacobinical conclave" and "the arrogance of a number of Congress to assemble as an electioneering caucus to control the citizens in their constitutional rights." But this did not prevent the Republicans themselves, the anti-Federalist members of Congress, from holding a caucus, also secret, for the nomination of candidates to the two highest executive offices of the Union.

At the next presidential election, in 1804, the Congressional Caucus reappeared, but on this occasion it no longer observed secrecy. The Republican members of Congress met publicly and settled the candidatures with all the formalities of deliberative assemblies, as if they were acting in pursuance of their mandate. The Federalists, who were almost annihilated as a party after Jefferson's victory, in 1801, gave up holding caucuses altogether. Henceforth there met only a Republican Congressional Caucus, which appeared on the scene every four years at the approach of the presidential election.

The extra-constitutional, not to say the anti-constitutional, rôle, which this body had assumed,[1] was more than once challenged with much heat, both in Congress and in the country. But its decisions were invariably accepted and its candidates elected.

[1] As is well known, the authors of the Constitution were much concerned about the special precautions to be taken for ensuring the choice of the best men for the chief magistracy and for preserving it

5. The authority of the Congressional Caucus, which got its recommendations accepted with this alacrity and made the "nomination" equivalent to the election, rested on two facts. The men who composed the Caucus represented in the capital of the Union the same social and political element, and in a still higher degree, which the members of the Legislative Caucuses represented in the States—that is, the leadership of the natural chiefs, whose authority was still admitted and tacitly acknowledged.

The sources of the Congressional Caucus' authority.

Again, the members of the Caucus represented the paramount cause which compelled obedience to the word of command from whatever quarter it proceeded. Rightly or wrongly, the anti-Federalists believed that the Republic and liberty were in mortal danger, that they were menaced by the Federalists, whose political ideal was the English constitutional monarchy, and who, having no confidence in the people, in its intelligence and its virtue, were bent on an authoritarian government. The Federalist party soon succumbed, but the recollection of the dangers, real or imaginary, to which liberty and equality were exposed by it, survived it and for

from intrigue and corruption. They hesitated to entrust the election to the masses, but they were not less apprehensive about leaving it to an assembly. Between direct democracy and oligarchy, they thought they had discovered a middle term in a special body of Electors emanating from the people. The idea was that these men, taken from outside official circles (the members of Congress and office-holders of the United States being made ineligible), scattered throughout the Union and charged with a temporary mission, beginning with the vote and ending with it, would be inaccessible to corruption, and would obey only the dictates of their conscience and their intelligence, the high standard of which had marked them out for the confidence of their fellow-citizens.

many a long day was a sort of bugbear. To prevent the Federalists from returning to the charge, the Republicans had to guard carefully against divisions, and it was to avoid them, to concentrate all the forces of the party in the great fight for the Presidency, that the Congressional Caucus obligingly offered its services.

Growing opposition to the Caucus.

6. However, the two great forces, social and political, of the leadership and of the categorical imperative of the party, on which the Caucus relied, had been slowly but steadily declining almost from the beginning of the century which witnessed the elevation of Jefferson and the triumph of democratic doctrines in the theories of government. The annihilation of the Federalists put an end to the division into parties, and Jefferson's famous remark, "We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists," was destined shortly to represent the real state of things. When Monroe came into power (in 1817), the old landmarks were definitively obliterated. "The era of good feelings" had dawned in political life. And yet the Congressional Caucus, in putting forward its candidates, repeated the old refrain, which exhorted the people to rally round them to confront the enemy. It invoked the sovereign cause of the party when the "party" no longer had any particular cause and represented only a memory of the past.

On the other hand, the prestige of the leadership had been systematically undermined for a quarter of a century by the social and economic revolution which was going on in the American republic. The eclipse of the Federalists, who were the living image of government by leaders, robbed it of one of its strongest supports. The influence of the clergy, which had

been one of the main props of the Federalists, was being thrust out of lay society. On the other side of the Alleghanies, on the virgin soil of the West, a new world was growing up, free from all traditions, because it had no past; instinct with equality, because its inhabitants, who were all new-comers, parvenus in the elementary sense of the word, resembled each other. And this country of the West was advancing daily in population, in wealth, and in political importance. The triumph of Jefferson, in 1801, without effecting a democratic revolution in habits, gave an extraordinary impulse to the propaganda of democratic ideas, made them the object of an almost ritual cult. Politicians vied with each other in repeating that the voice of the people is the voice of God, that before the majesty of the people everything should bow. Writers popularized and gave point to these ideas.

The lesson which the American citizen learnt from things was not less stimulating. Material comfort was increasing with unprecedented rapidity. The series of great inventions which marked the beginning of the nineteenth century, the natural wealth which sprang from the soil, gave each and all a share in the profits of the economic revolution. The soul of the American citizen swelled with pride, with the confidence of the man who is self-sufficing, who knows no superiors. The leading citizens, therefore, who in Congress or in the Legislature of his State, meeting in caucus, dictated to him his line of conduct, the choice of his representatives, became a set of usurpers in his eyes. About the end of Monroe's second administration, the whole Union became the scene of a violent controversy about

the next meeting of the Congressional Caucus; it was discussed in the Press; it occupied the public meetings; the State Legislatures voted resolutions upon it. Most of the numerous manifestations of public opinion were hostile to the Caucus. The popular meetings almost without exception condemned the nominations made by the Caucus as a flagrant usurpation of the rights of the people.[1]

The fall of the Caucus.

7. The agitation raised in the country against the Congressional Caucus, and still more the divisions in Congress, torn asunder this time between several candidates, made the latter abandon the idea of obtaining the coveted nomination from the Caucus. One candidate only, Crawford, strove for it. The meeting of the Caucus took place in the hall of Congress, on February 14, 1824. But of two hundred and sixteen members summoned, only sixty-six had responded to the appeal. Crawford obtained an almost unanimous vote, but it was that of a small minority of the party only, and the result simply proved the inability of the Caucus to effect the concentration which was its *raison d'être*. A battle royal was soon fought over the Caucus in the Congress itself. During the discussion of the electoral system a passionate debate on the Caucus opened in the Senate. Long indictments were delivered against the "new, extraordinary, self-created central power,

[1] "The time has now arrived when the machinations of the *few* to dictate to the *many*, however indirectly applied, will be met with becoming firmness, by a people jealous of their rights . . . The only unexceptional source from which nominations can proceed is the people themselves. To them belongs the right of choosing; and they alone can with propriety take any previous steps." (Resolutions voted in Ohio, in 1823.)

stronger than that of the Constitution." Its perpetuation will open the door to the greatest abuses and to corruption. "It is an encroachment on the sovereignty of the people, the more alarming inasmuch as it is exercised in the corrupt atmosphere of executive patronage and influence. Make me President, and I will make you a Minister, or Secretary, or, at all events, I will provide you with a good berth, suited to your wants if not to your capacity. . . . The President and Congress were intended by the wise framers of our Constitution to act as checks each upon the other, but, by the system at present practised, they lose the benefit of this salutary provision."

The defenders of the Caucus, far more numerous in the Senate, took rather a high tone with its opponents: "The old adage is that by its fruit the tree shall be known. What has been the result of this practice for the last twenty years? Has your Constitution been violated? Is not our happy situation an object of congratulation? Is not every nation which is striving to break the fetters of slavery, looking to us as the landmark by which they are to be guided? These are the fruits of this system, which has been followed in relation to the presidential election, from 1800 up to the present day; which has been sustained by the people; and which has some of the greatest names of the country to support it." The debate lasted for three days, more than twenty speakers taking part in it. At last the Senate, wearied out, adjourned the discussion *sine die*. But it was clear to every one that the verdict had been given, that the Congressional Caucus was doomed. "King Caucus is dethroned," was said on all sides. And it made no

attempt to recover its sovereignty; the animadversion which it aroused in the country was too great.

Collapse of the whole caucus nominating system and birth of the convention system.

8. The collapse of the Congressional Caucus entailed that of the whole system of nomination for elective offices by caucuses. The Legislative Caucuses in the States had also to retire before the rising democratic tide. Their ranks had already been broken into before the explosion of democratic feeling, which began with the third decade of the nineteenth century. In the Legislative Caucuses composed only of members of the party in the Legislature, the districts in which their party was in a minority were left unrepresented, and yet decisions were taken in them which bound the party in the whole State. To meet the complaints made on this score, the caucuses decided, towards the latter part of the first decade, to take in delegates elected *ad hoc* by the members of the party in those districts. The gap was made, and it was destined to go on widening until the whole people could enter by it. The participation of elected members, at first exceptional, became gradually the rule: the candidates were nominated in conventions of delegates from the counties, in which the members of the Legislature were to sit only in the absence of special envoys. The name of convention, which, from the very beginning, was used to designate gatherings of citizens from several places, became in the meantime the regular appellation of the representative meetings of delegates.

The mixed convention eventually made room for the pure convention, composed solely of popular delegates elected on each occasion *ad hoc*. The first pure convention was organized in Pennsylvania in 1817. In

most of the other States the Legislative Caucus disappeared more slowly. In the State of New York it kept the field till 1824, in spite of repeated attempts made to supplant it. The force of popular inertia, the power of habit, and the prestige of leadership stemmed for some time the growing tide of democracy.

SECOND CHAPTER

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CONVENTION SYSTEM

Agitation on the presidential election of 1824.

9. After the collapse of the Congressional Caucus in 1824, one era in the political life of the United States came to an end; another was beginning. But for the moment the political stage was all ruins and chaos: the old parties were broken up, the new ones were not yet in existence; leadership was doomed; the extra-constitutional machinery of the caucus, which was the base of operations of the parties and the leaders, went to pieces, while the new base was scarcely outlined. This disorder broke out manifestly during the still pending fight for the presidential nomination. The fiasco of the last Congressional Caucus confused still further the situation.

Instead of the usual recommendation of a single candidate, public manifestations occurred in various quarters in favour now of one and now of another of the several competitors. They proceeded alike from the State Legislatures, from semi-official gatherings of the members of Legislatures meeting in caucus, from State conventions composed solely of delegates, and finally from large meetings of citizens. Everywhere people expressed their opinions, declared their preferences, and they did so with a feverish eagerness, as if they wished to make up for the long abstention enforced upon them

by the exclusive power which the Congressional Caucus had wielded. But at the final vote in the College of Electors none of the candidates for the Presidency secured a majority, and, in accordance with the Constitution, the election passed to the House of Representatives. Of the three candidates who had obtained the most votes in the Electoral College, Jackson, John Quincy Adams, and Crawford, it chose the second, a statesman of the highest eminence.

Hardly had the new President entered on his duties than his less fortunate competitors and their followers in Congress began a pitiless war on his administration. The arch-contriver of this coalition was the Senator of New York, Martin Van Buren, who has left a name in the history of the United States as one of the fathers of the great managers and crack wire-pullers. Having discerned in one of the defeated candidates, Jackson, the coming man, he set himself to form a party in his favour. That party, which was destined to become the Democratic party, was at first only an amalgam of factions and of coteries, a coalition of individuals devoid of principles, with no distinct character. It could succeed only if carried on by a powerful organization in the country. Van Buren set to work to provide for this want, exceptionally qualified for the task by a long apprenticeship in his native State, which had early developed the arts of the politician.

The New York politicians.

10. The part played in this connection by the State of New York, and the precedents which it created, were of such importance as to deserve special mention. The motley mass of the cosmopolitan population of the great

Atlantic city soon precluded the austere government of a ruling class such as obtained on the Puritan soil of New England, and its political life had long been an uninterrupted series of struggles of rival *condottieri.* These were supplied at one time by great families, with a large plebeian following, like the *optimates* in Rome; at another by successful parvenus, who generally allied themselves with the patricians. More intelligent than the Roman *plebs*, less wretched and above all more alive to their capacity of "men and citizens," the people of New York required to be managed with skill, with science, to be drawn into either of the rival camps. Necessity produced the men and created the scientific modes of action.

Among the first of these clever manipulators of the electoral material to whom tradition goes back was Aaron Burr, the man who, after having attained the Vice-Presidency of the Republic, dragged out the long and miserable existence of a Cain, abhorred as the murderer of Hamilton and as a traitor to his country. A born organizer of men, full of resource and possessing considerable personal charm, Burr was able to gather round him, in the city of New York and in most of the counties of the State, men of a similar stamp, who combined great skill and activity with unbounded devotion to their chief. Over the whole area of the State they formed a sort of net, the meshes of which served for catching the voters. Their power of attraction consisted in a thorough knowledge of the various elements of the electorate and a consummate skill in combination and negotiation, whether in the making up of the lists of the candidates, or in the distribution of rewards after

the victory in the form of public offices and dignities. For principles and convictions nobody cared a rap.

Aaron Burr had a host of imitators. One of his leading disciples, the most eminent in fact, was Martin Van Buren. Beneath these head wire-pullers there grew up in New York, in the first instance, and then in other places, a large *personnel* engaged specially in politics, attracted everywhere by a desire for public employment. From the very foundation of the United States, the lucrative posts, on a comparatively modest scale, which the public service could offer, were sought after with eagerness. For a considerable time the office-seekers were stopped by the small number of places as well as by the existence of a ruling class, which had a prior claim on them, in the natural course of things. This competition had a good deal to do with the democratic ferment which set in during the first decades of the nineteenth century.

But in proportion as the old generation which had founded the Republic disappeared, as the development of the country entailed that of the public service, and the political contingents increased through the extension of the suffrage, the scramble for the loaves and fishes became closer and keener. There arose a whole class of men of low degree who applied all their energies in this direction, who sought their means of subsistence in politics, and especially in its troubled waters. The social and political state of affairs in New York, referred to above, was particularly favourable to the rise of this type of individual. The neighbouring State of Pennsylvania, also a prey to factions and extremely democratic in tone, had likewise at an early stage let in the small

politicians. In the other States they were not so common, but everywhere they presented, by the beginning of the third decade of the nineteenth century, a distinct element in society, which lowered politics and gave an invidious signification to the very term of "politician," the original etymological meaning of which denoted simply persons engaged in public affairs.

The politicians, Jackson, and the Demos.

11. The arts of management developed in the political atmosphere of New York were now about to be applied by Van Buren on a more extensive scale and on a larger stage. He formed committees throughout the Union to sweep up adherents for Jackson and stir the electorate by speaking and writing, in public meetings and private gatherings. The staff required for the performance of this task, and a picked one, was ready to hand, — the "politicians." As soon as J. Q. Adams became President, in 1825, Jackson's friends shouted that the will of the people had been violated by the choice made by the House, for the chief magistracy, of J. Q. Adams in preference to the candidate most favoured by the popular vote, Andrew Jackson. The Constitution no doubt left the House complete freedom of choice, but it had used it in a manner contrary to the democratic principle. By means of the letter of the Constitution the people had been balked of its rights! These charges aroused in honest and simple souls a profound indignation, a regular exasperation against the enemies of the people. These enemies were all the men of intelligence, of culture, of wealth, of social refinement. They aroused popular jealousy not only by the monopoly of political power which they enjoyed and which caused the revolt against the Caucus; they irritated the sus-

ceptibilities of the masses still more by the social supremacy which they assumed and which made them in fact a sort of caste on the levelled soil of the New World. General Jackson, on the other hand, without being a demagogue, had no equal in flattering the instincts and the passions of the people.

The politicians vigorously exploited the feelings which inclined the masses towards Jackson, conducting their campaign with an unprecedented virulence. He was triumphantly elected. He and his friends regarded their success as the victory of the Demos. So the enthusiasm of the Demos was immense. Jackson appeared as a new Joshua, who led the chosen people into the promised land wrested from the "enlightened classes," and the people following in Jackson's train flocked to take possession of it. "Persons have come five hundred miles (with no railways!) to see Jackson," wrote Webster, "and they really seem to think that the country is rescued from some dreadful danger."

Establishment of the spoils system.

12. The vast popular army which marched triumphantly through the streets of Washington dispersed to their homes, but one of its divisions remained, the corps of marauders which followed it. This was composed of the politicians. They wanted their spoils. By way of remuneration for their services they demanded places in the administration. They filled the air of Washington like locusts, they swarmed in the halls and lobbies of the public buildings, in the adjoining streets they besieged the residences of Jackson and his ministers. Jackson hastened to admit the justice of their claim. His official newspaper had already an-

nounced beforehand that he would "reward his friends and punish his enemies." The punishment began at once. Many government servants were dismissed without a hearing and without a word of explanation, for the sole reason that they were, or were suspected of having been, hostile to Jackson and that their places were wanted. Every official was henceforth at the mercy of informers. A reign of terror set in in the public departments. During the first year of his Presidency Jackson cashiered or got rid of more than two thousand persons, whereas all his predecessors together had dismissed, from the foundation of the Republic, only seventy-four public servants, several of them for cause. The new men who were put in the place of the old ones were often quite incompetent; their sole merit was that they had "helped Jackson."

The "rewarding of friends and the punishment of enemies," carried to such lengths by Jackson, was not a practice altogether unknown in the United States. It had been in vogue, and for a considerable time past, both in the State of New York and in Pennsylvania. Already in Aaron Burr's time, towards the close of the eighteenth century, in the contests of the New York factions, the winning side laid hands on the public offices. The elaborate organization formed by Van Buren in the State of New York had developed this method. And when, some time afterwards, in the Senate of the United States, Van Buren was accused of having initiated these practices, one of his associates, Senator Marcy, protested against the charge as not involving anything reprehensible: "The politicians *preach* what they *practise*. When they are contending for

victory they avow their intention of enjoying the fruits of it. They see nothing wrong in the rule that to the victor belong the spoils of the enemy." This remark about "the spoils to the victor" became famous and passed into everyday language.

The whole Union was destined to fall a victim to this system, because its political situation became similar to that of New York. The old political supremacy wielded by the élite of the nation, which radiated from Washington, having been shattered with the Congressional Caucus, the leadership crumbled into a thousand fragments; it passed to an innumerable crowd of petty local leaders who stood nearer to the masses, but who too often were only needy adventurers. And yet it was their services which had to be resorted to for building up the party without principles which was got together under Jackson's name, and to keep up this mechanical aggregation there was nothing but the artificial cement of "rewards and punishments." Moreover, the Secretary of State of the new President did not need to put up with the spoils system: he was no other than Martin Van Buren.

Rotation.

The practice of the politicians was soon countenanced by the theory which asserted that in a democratic government public offices were not personal property, and that every citizen had a right to share in the emoluments of the public service. Jackson boldly proclaimed this theory in his first presidential message. He defended there the dismissals carried out by him, explaining that the welfare of the service demanded frequent change of officials, for those who were permanent fixtures inevitably became indifferent to the public interest; that the

service lost more by keeping them than it gained by their experience. "The rotation," declared the President, "constituted a first principle in the Republican creed." The application of these "first republican principles," of the rotation and division of the spoils, very soon threw the whole province of public life into grave disorder; it deteriorated the public service by destroying all stability, by setting up intrigue and favour in place of merit and professional zeal, and left the door open to adventurers and hungry mercenaries. The organized parties alone benefited by that system; it furnished them with armies of election agents scattered all over the country, ready to do anything to secure the triumph of the party; for their own fate was at stake.

Development of the convention system.

13. The staff of these armies, as we are already aware, was supplied by the delegates' conventions, which from 1824 onwards developed by a continuous process into a highly finished system. Established at first in a more or less sporadic fashion, the conventions became general and spread throughout the country, falling according to the territorial units and electoral divisions into State, district, county conventions, etc., and ended by covering the whole Union in a regular and exhaustive manner. This process, which began towards the end of Monroe's administration, lasted no less than a quarter of a century. In the East, where the ground had been so admirably prepared, especially in New York and Pennsylvania, the States of the politicians, the popular representative party organization developed quickly and at once laid hold of the electorate, but it was not quite the same thing in the South and the West. In

certain parts of the West, as in Illinois, the new system was received with suspicion. People smelt a "Yankee contrivance destined to abridge the liberties of the people, by depriving individuals, on their own mere motion, of the privilege of becoming candidates, and depriving each man of the right to vote for a candidate of his own selection and choice."

New political and social conditions favourable to it.

But the opposition which the convention system encountered could not prevail against it, for it corresponded to too many interests and wants, passions and cravings. The democratic impulse which carried Jackson into power had forced the way, in the constitutional sphere, for two important changes: the introduction of universal suffrage, and the very considerable extension of the elective principle to public offices. The number of voters increased, and the task of each one became vast and highly complicated. And yet many new members of the sovereign people, especially in the industrial and manufacturing centres which were beginning to arise, had no insight into public affairs, and almost all had no spare time. The haste to get rich was infecting the whole nation with such intensity that in point of fact the effective exercise of its political rights was becoming rather an embarrassment to it than otherwise. Yet the pride and the consciousness of its strength which filled the new American democracy could not assent to a formal abdication. The American wanted at least the illusion of enjoying and using his rights.

The new institution introduced into the political life of the United States met admirably all these requirements. The convention, by nominating the candidates for all the elective offices and settling the programmes,

relieved the American of the most difficult task for a citizen of a free country, and he appeared none the less to remain absolute master of the situation, since the members of the convention were merely his instructed messengers. Nay, the prerogatives with which the Constitution had invested him were extended: not only could not a member now be created without his intervention, but not even a simple candidate. Again, the conventions satisfied ambitions and appetites, of a more or less legitimate kind, aroused by the advent of a new social strata. They provided a ladder for the "new men" who aspired to public offices. To others who, eager for a sphere of public activity and influence, could not find room within the limited area of the Constitution, the conventions offered a sort of substitute for it in their organization modelled on the constitutional fabric with their hierarchy, their powers, their dignitaries. Finally, they were of still higher value to the more vulgar and far more numerous ambitions, represented by the new breed of politicians.

Completion of the system.

All these advantages which the conventions offered, from various points of view, were completed and enhanced by the establishment, towards the end of Jackson's first Presidency, of a central Organization, in the form of *national conventions*. Placed on the top of the local conventions, the national convention formed with them a complete extra-constitutional machinery which became the axis of party government now definitively installed in the American Republic. The national conventions were composed of delegates chosen by the State conventions and the district conventions, which, in their turn, were composed of delegates sent by the

county conventions, these latter emanating directly from the primary meetings of the citizens. While the local conventions took charge of the elective offices in the States and in Congress, the national conventions undertook the duty of nominating the candidates for the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency of the Union. Side by side with the conventions, which met from time to time only for the discharge of the special and momentary duty of nomination of candidates, there grew up a permanent Organization in the form of committees for each territorial unit, for the State, the county, the township, the ward, which summoned the conventions and the primary assemblies, undertook all the preliminary business, and in general managed the election work.

First national conventions.

14. The National Convention, which took the place of the Congressional Caucus, as regards the selection of candidates for the two chief offices of the Republic, did not succeed to it at once. After the fall of the Congressional Caucus there was an interregnum of a few years. The first national convention was brought about by a casual episode. A freemason in the State of New York, who wanted to write a book divulging the secrets of the order, having disappeared in a mysterious way, a report was circulated that he had been captured by the freemasons and murdered by them. The indignation aroused by this alleged crime turned against freemasonry and in a short time extended from one State to another. Very soon the enemies of freemasonry became so numerous that they thought themselves strong enough to contest elections throughout the Union and to dislodge freemasonry from the political power

which, according to its antagonists, was its principal object. A general convention of one hundred and fourteen anti-masonic delegates, from different parts of the Union, met at Baltimore in 1831, and nominated candidates for the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency. Defeated at the polls, the anti-masons soon disappeared as an organized party.

But the example of the national convention which they introduced was followed immediately by the opponents of Jackson and then by his supporters. The former had amalgamated, more or less satisfactorily, under the common denomination of National Republicans. Their most brilliant champion, Henry Clay, was clearly marked out for contesting the Presidency with Jackson. A national convention of delegates of this party met at Baltimore in December, 1831. It became the true prototype of those great periodical party assizes which from that time to this have played a unique part in the political life of the United States. The convention was attended by one hundred and fifty-six delegates, representing eighteen States and the District of Columbia. Owing to the difficulties of travelling many States were unrepresented. The gathering was nevertheless an imposing one. Clay was nominated unanimously.

Wire-pullers.

Jackson's followers, the Democratic Republicans, met in their turn, in national convention, at Baltimore in May, 1832, not to nominate the candidate for the Presidency, who was of course Jackson himself, but to solemnly proclaim the candidate for the Vice-Presidency. Jackson chose Martin Van Buren for this post, to reward him for his devotion to him, but Van Buren was

far from enjoying widespread respect in the country. The Convention was to be the means of obtaining it for him; this plan was hit upon, even before the Convention of National Republicans, by Jackson's intimates, who formed a sort of occult government around him known as the "kitchen cabinet." With the help of Jackson's trusty followers in the several States the kitchen cabinet succeeded in getting up in the country a movement for demanding a national convention. This movement was the first example of great manifestations of opinion, apparently spontaneous, but in reality produced by a machinery with popular forms which screened the doings of the wire-pullers. The convention, which met, acclaimed Jackson and nominated Martin Van Buren for the Vice-Presidency by a considerable majority.

The triumphant re-election of Jackson, in 1832, confirmed his prestige with the masses and his power over the "politicians," who obeyed him implicitly, — so much so that he was able to designate his successor, like a Roman emperor. It was the trusty Martin Van Buren, Vice-President by the grace of Jackson, who was destined to inherit the presidential office. And on this occasion again it was by means of a national convention that he was to be thrust on the Electors as the deliberate choice of the party. The opposition to this plan, which manifested itself, was declared by Jackson to be high treason against the people. The convention met in 1835; it was composed to a great extent of office-holders — that is, of men absolutely under the thumb of the administration. The anti-Jacksonian party, which had for some time past taken the name of Whig, did

not hold a national convention for the election of 1836: it was not harmonious enough. That was the only exception. At the presidential election of 1840 Whigs and Democrats both had recourse to national conventions, which from that time became the only central official party organ.

Conventions full of office-holders.

15. The working of the new Organization revealed almost at once the unhealthy politico-social conditions amid which it was introduced. The primary meetings, out of which sprang all the successive delegations constituting the hierarchy of the conventions, were deserted by the great body of citizens; and the politicians, aided by their friends, easily got control of them and bestowed on themselves the nominations to the more or less lucrative posts which they coveted. The Organization in all its grades was full of office-holders; they not only acted behind the scenes, but attended the various conventions in a body as delegates, and very often formed the great majority in these assemblies; in election time they devoted all their energies to the support of the candidates of their party.

Attempts were repeatedly made to prohibit the intervention of public officers in politics, but without success. They openly neglected their duties for their "work" in the party organizations, because this "work" alone counted and bore fruit. "Politics is the business of the office-holder," observed a newspaper of the day, "as much as agriculture is the business of the farmer. It is his trade, the craft by which he thrives. Hence he is interested to establish some means by which he may control them, and the conventions are the very thing for him. The multitude cannot go to caucuses

and conventions; they are necessarily made up of the office-holders and their agents; and when they once agree upon their man, he is put forth as the regular nomination."

Independence of the voters stifled.

True, if the voter refused to vote for the candidates chosen by the convention, "no one could be punished for treason in so doing," says a publicist of that time, "otherwise than by losing the favour of his party and being denounced as a traitor; which was almost as efficacious in restraining the refractory as the pains and penalties of treason, the hanging and embowelling of former times." To this moral constraint was added another imposed by the practical necessities of the vote, which definitively stifled the independence of the voters. The number of the elective offices, and consequently of the elections to be conducted, having become very large, the custom arose, at the instigation of the politicians, of holding them all at once, for the offices of the city, of the county, of the State, and of the Union, and on a single list. It was becoming difficult, and even impossible, for voters left to their own inspiration to make up so long a voting paper. The conventions and their committees helped them out of the difficulty by making up for them the list of candidates, the "ticket," and the voters were forced willy-nilly to accept it and vote it whole; for if they did not vote it in its entirety, they increased the chances of the opposite side, which would vote its whole list.

Better citizens desert public life.

The great body of the citizens were thus reduced to the position of dummies, or rather they had reduced themselves to that position by withdrawing from public life. Not only did the commercial classes which formed

the great majority of the nation become completely engrossed in their private interests, but political indifference infected even the intellectual leaders of the nation, the men in the liberal professions. The separation of society from politics became the leading fact of the situation; the nation had, as it were, split into two absolutely distinct parts: a large majority, which was toiling, developing, and growing rich, and a small, active minority, full of passions and still more of appetites, which was monopolizing political action. The public administration, which this minority invaded, was soon filled with an atmosphere of corruption; scandalous abuses, shameless devices of plunder of the treasury and of the public, speedily came to light in it.

Revolt against Jacksonian democracy.

16. These scandals would not, perhaps, have roused public opinion if the country had been in a prosperous state. But it was suffering severely from the economic crisis which broke out in 1837, soon after the retirement of Jackson and the accession of Van Buren. The party in power was made responsible for it, and the country resounded with the cry: "Away with the spoilers!" The Whigs offered themselves as liberators. They no doubt contained the élite of the community, the men of means and of intelligence, but here as well as in the rival camp the politicians held the outposts and directed the operations.

Clay rejected.

The Whig national convention, which met, in 1839, at Harrisburg to nominate the candidates for the Presidency, supplied only too eloquent proof of it. The candidate was marked out beforehand by the whole history of the party which for the last fifteen years had been contending with the Jacksonian democracy; he

was the great Whig leader, Henry Clay, an illustrious statesman, a great orator, and gifted with a personal charm which won all hearts. But the politicians were afraid that at the election he would not be able to rally the votes of all the adversaries of Van Buren, many of whom were not Whigs. They thought that a candidate less compromised in the struggles of the parties would be more likely to gain the victory and its fruits. By means of niceties of procedure which provided for each delegation balloting separately, they succeeded in leaving Clay in a minority and finally agreed on the name of a somewhat obscure personage, General Harrison, whose principal claim consisted in victories won by him thirty years previously in encounters with tribes of Red Indians.

"Tippecanoe and Tyler too."

The election campaign which now began revealed the methods by which men put forward by the conventions could be foisted on the country in spite of their mediocrity. Hitherto all the candidates for the Presidency had been statesmen of more or less eminence, with a national reputation; Jackson had no record as a statesman, but he was borne along by the impetuous torrent of triumphant democracy; Van Buren had been thrust on the nation by the immense prestige of Jackson. Harrison possessed none of these qualifications. But the Whig Organization set to work to "raise enthusiasm" in his favour by devices which aimed especially at the imagination and the senses of the masses. Monster meetings, processions, parades, spectacular entertainments of every kind, songs, were all so many opportunities for shouting, for howling out Harrison's name without further reference to the virtues and

qualities which marked him out for the chief magistracy.

A Democratic newspaper in the East having said, by way of ridiculing the mediocrity of the Whig candidate, that if Harrison were given a log cabin and hard cider he would rather stay at home in the West, the Whigs immediately took up the remark as an insult to their candidate, adopted "log cabin and hard cider" as their motto and made it their war-cry. Harrison was the "log cabin" candidate, the man of the people, living its frugal and simple life and cultivating all its virtues, offering hospitality to every passer-by, who found the door open and a glass of cider on the table, whereas Van Buren inhabited a palace and ate with gold spoons and forks. Everywhere log cabins were run up, models of them were paraded in procession through the streets, ornaments for women were made of them, medals were struck with them. Meetings organized in the open air drew enormous crowds, people brought their wives and children. Torrents of oratory flowed at the meetings, but it was devoid of sense; it did not seek to enlighten the mind or to bring home convictions, but to strike the imagination. This effect was obtained mainly by political songs composed for the occasion, which, passing from mouth to mouth, produced a downright frenzy, absurd as they were.[1] Clubs and associations of young men were formed throughout the country with the special duty of keeping up the hurly-burly.

[1] The most famous of these songs was "Tippecanoe and Tyler too." Tippecanoe was Harrison's nickname, given him in memory of his victory over the Indians at Tippecanoe; Tyler was the name of the candidate for the Vice-Presidency adopted by the Whig national convention at the same time as Harrison for the Presidency.

The Union was turned into a huge fair; for months there was a continuous carnival, with a whole people for actors. The success of "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" at the poll was extraordinary; the majority obtained by the Whig candidate over his rival, Van Buren, surpassed all expectations.

THIRD CHAPTER

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONVENTION SYSTEM

Spoils system entrenched.

17. THE change of parties in power effected by the election of 1840 only made it more evident that the political manners and methods brought into fashion by the Jacksonian democracy were not a transitory manifestation. The Whigs had rushed into the fight to the cry of "Away with the spoilers," but hardly was the battle over than they flung themselves on the spoils. Twelve years' waiting in opposition had given a keen edge to their appetites. As on the accession of Jackson, Washington presented the spectacle of a city invaded by office-seekers. The new means of locomotion, the railways, which did not exist in 1829, facilitated this invasion of the hungry host in a peculiar degree. Before the new President had entered on office his future ministers were beset by applicants, who were not all small, needy politicians; among them were Members of Congress, Senators of the United States. When Harrison took up his abode in the White House, the rush became tremendous; the applicants literally pursued the ministers and the President day and night; a good many candidates for office slept in the corridors of the White House, to catch the President the next morning as soon as he got up; there were no fixed times for audiences, the "log cabin" President indulged in a

simplicity which allowed every one to have access to him. But his great age could not stand the fatigues and worries caused by the never-ending crowd of applicants, and he died after one month of office.

He was succeeded, in accordance with the Constitution, by the Vice-President, Tyler. Originally a Democrat, who parted from Jackson without embracing the Whig creed, mistrusted or disowned by either party, Tyler fancied that he could create a personal party which would carry him into the Presidency for another term, or even for two terms. To recruit adherents, the President turned out the officials devoted to the Whigs, and replaced them by his own creatures. He gained nothing by this; it was the genuine Democratic candidate who won the victory at the presidential election of 1844. As soon as he came into power, the new President in his turn upset the public service even more completely than his predecessors had done; almost all the Federal officials were changed to make room for the victors.

The "party guillotine."

From that time it became the rule that every change of President involved as a matter of right the dismissal of all public servants appointed by his predecessor of the opposite party. As soon as the new President entered on his office, the "guillotine of the party" was set going for the greater triumph of the so-called democratic principle of "rotation," which was alleged to be essential to the preservation of popular liberties. For the struggle for office kept the political mind of the nation on the alert, while participation in public honours was an incentive to the citizen to remain loyal to free institutions. "It is a great American principle," said a member in his place in the Senate, in 1846, "it lies

at the foundation of our government." In vain did men of the stamp of Webster and Calhoun raise their voice against these practices and these theories. At last there was no need even of a change of the party in power to carry out the hecatomb of office-holders, the principle of rotation enjoined it even when the party was confirmed in power by the new election; those who had feasted were obliged to make way for their hungry political coreligionists. That was according to justice; it was also necessary for maintaining the party, as the Democratic President Buchanan, who succeeded, in 1857, to the Democrat Pierce, acknowledged.

National conventions managed for the spoils.

18. Presidential "patronage," that is, the power of appointing to public offices, having become the life-blood of the organized parties, their main efforts were brought to bear on the national conventions in which the choice of the candidates for the Presidency was decided. Managed by astute wire-pullers, the national conventions furnished a long record of tricks, of stratagems, of unscrupulous manœuvres, sometimes even of scandalous acts. The Whig convention at Harrisburg gave a foretaste of this in 1839; the Democratic convention of 1844 continued it. The Democrats, put to rout by "Tippecanoe and Tyler too," had quickly recovered their ground in the Congressional elections, and appeared to have all the more serious chances of success in the presidential election that the country had derived little benefit from the Whig administration. The general feeling in the Democratic party assigned the Presidency to Van Buren. But in the meanwhile an event occurred which inspired the wire-pullers of the party with apprehensions about him.

The question of slavery, which had for some time past been slowly agitating the country, became suddenly a burning one, in consequence of the plan formed by the slaveholders for extending the area of slavery by the annexation of the old Mexican province of Texas. Van Buren pronounced, more or less clearly, against annexation. As the slaveholders of the South supplied the Democratic party with a considerable portion of its contingents, the Democratic managers considered that Van Buren had seriously impaired his chances of success in the South, and to avoid being wrecked with him they decided to throw their great leader overboard.

They accomplished their purpose at the national convention by means of a device of procedure, just as the Whigs got rid of Clay. The convention adopted the decision that the candidates for the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency must obtain a majority of two-thirds of the votes to be validly nominated. At the first ballot 151 votes out of 266 were cast for Van Buren, but this absolute majority was no longer sufficient. At the second ballot he received still fewer votes, at each fresh ballot he lost some; after the seventh ballot Van Buren's friends withdrew his candidature. The minority then stepped in with a comparatively obscure candidate, James K. Polk. He obtained only 44 votes; but his very mediocrity appeared to a good many delegates as a sort of guarantee of success; being little known in the country, he gave umbrage to no one, and he might, after all, they thought, ultimately secure a majority. The next ballot at once disclosed numerous adhesions to Polk, and then a wild stampede set in; delegations which had just cast their vote for other candidates

recanted in headlong haste and went over to Polk, and when the balloting closed, it turned out that Polk had been nominated unanimously.

It was of no service to Clay and Van Buren to be the great leaders of their parties. Henceforth the best candidate for the Presidency was not the one with the most sterling qualities, but the one who was likely to win, and to get the loaves and fishes for his followers. In this policy of results the sole criterion was that of suitableness, of "availability." "He is not available," was henceforth a candidate's death-sentence.

Opportunism of the great leaders themselves.

19. The opportunism of the politicians of the conventions, which tended to keep the best men out of power, was reinforced by the opportunism of the eminent leaders themselves, which dealt the political leadership its death-blow. Here again it was the presidential campaign of 1844 which gave a melancholy exhibition of it, especially in the Whig camp. The Whigs, repenting in a way the affront offered to their glorious leader, Henry Clay, at the preceding election, nominated him on this occasion for the Presidency by acclamation. In the course of the election campaign he had to state his views on the burning question of Texas, and at first he declared himself opposed to the annexation of Texas; but before long he whittled down his declaration more and more, in order not to estrange supporters in the South. This rather too clever attitude cost Clay the votes of a good many Whigs strongly opposed to slavery, and their desertion caused his defeat. The disappointment was keenly felt throughout the Union by his numerous admirers; men and women shed tears; many despaired of the future of the Republic

and of democratic government on seeing a Polk preferred to Henry Clay, the great Clay.

Yet so far as his defeat and not Polk's success was concerned, it was due not so much to the failings of popular government as to those of leaders who, amid their faint-hearted calculations of votes to be won or lost, could not or would not have the courage of their opinions, who kept back the plain unvarnished truth from the people. No doubt the confused mass of voters under a popular form of government, and the constant uncertainty as to what they think and what they want, demoralize public men anxious to win the largest possible following. But still more do these men who shirk responsibility in their anxiety to thrust themselves on the multitude, who, instead of walking straight before it, twist and turn from side to side, still more do these would-be leaders bewilder the electorate.

The eminent statesmen who were not eliminated by the conventions retired from the field of their own accord. This course was taken by Calhoun, the great rival of the Van Burens and the Clays. On the eve of the election of 1844 his candidature for the Presidency was mooted for a moment. But he would not allow it to be brought before the national convention, and in a published letter he gave his reasons, arraigning the whole system of the conventions. "We, General Jackson and most of the leaders of the party at that time," said Calhoun, "we contributed to put down the Congressional Caucus. Far, however, was it from my intention in aiding to put that down, to substitute in its place what I regard as a hundred times more objectionable in every point of view."

When the nomination of Polk at the convention became known, there was a general cry of astonishment throughout the land: "Who is Polk?" But the country was destined to receive at the hand of the conventions even more inadequate candidates for the succession to the Washingtons, the Jeffersons, and the Jacksons. Polk was only the first of a long line of "dark horses" who at the last moment won the Party race. As a prominent champion could not be agreed on at the convention, after a series of intrigues a dark horse was put forward. Following on a number of fruitless ballots for leading candidates the dark horse appeared all at once on the course, labouring along with a few votes behind the cracks; but gradually he outstripped them, and before long was seen to be leading.

The people were helpless. Imprisoned in the convention system and the dogma of "regularity," they could not but ratify the selections made for them, and Senator Benton, the late lieutenant of Jackson, was not far from the truth when he said, "The people have no more control over the selection of the man who is to be the President than the subjects of kings have over the birth of the child who is to be their ruler."

Party organization strengthened

20. The knot fastened round the body of American democracy by this system was continually being drawn tighter. Party loyalty embodied in the Organization was becoming more enthusiastic and more intolerant. The party became a sort of church, which admitted no dissent. The contingents arrayed under the formal conception of the party kept growing larger and larger. In the first place the tribe of office-seekers multiplied. The deeper the spoils and rotation system

took root, the greater became the number of people who competed. At the same time new and abundant material was added by the continuous European immigration, which assumed enormous dimensions after 1831, each succeeding year flinging larger and larger masses of humanity on American soil, mostly from Ireland and from Germany. Owing to the facilities offered by the American naturalization laws, the immigrants began to enjoy the rights of citizenship after a short period of residence. Ignorant, with no political education, these new members of the commonwealth took service at once in the party organization and blindly followed the word of command. Small elective offices or distributions of money and spirituous liquors kept them, especially the Irish, loyal to the party.

by foreign element;

Finally, besides the growing horde of the professional politicians and the ductile mass of immigrants, the party Organization met with a great accession of strength, after 1840, owing to the slavery question, from the upper strata of society, of American stock, possessing a competency and culture. This problem, which had long been flickering in a sort of demi-obscurity, rose on the political horizon of the Union during the decade 1840–1850 in all its grandeur, and threw a crude and trying light on the society of the North. With the exception of a select resolute group impelled by their strong feelings and generous sympathies, the Abolitionists, nobody cared to face the problem; it disturbed the habits of a community engrossed in its affairs, it shocked its notions of propriety, it injured its interests, for it demanded from it self-examination and perhaps action. The best way of escaping from the horrid apparition was to

by slavery question.

shut one's eyes. But in that case some fixed support was required for moving across the open surface of political life, a sort of railing which could be followed automatically. The party Organization supplied this railing; you walked with your party straight before you, without heeding anything else, without even allowing your attention to be distracted by the scandals of the spoils system and by the prostitution of politics to the vulgar ambitions and appetites identified with the party Organization.

But the parties used up.

21. But the traditional parties were the less able to maintain the *status quo* that they no longer had any real basis themselves; all that was left them was the name and style under which they traded. The differences of opinion on financial and economic questions which consolidated the Jacksonians and their opponents into two rival parties of Democrats and Whigs, had long since been settled. The only real question which was agitating the country, the slavery problem, gave rise to divergencies which no more coincided with the division into Whigs and Democrats than did the worn-out problems of their old creed. Inside each of these parties there were opponents as well as upholders of slavery; the southerners, whether they belonged to the Whig or to the Democratic party, were generally favourable to this "domestic institution" of their section of the country, whereas the Democrats and the Whigs of the North, and especially the Democrats, were divided on the question, the majority, however, being opposed to the extension of slavery. The realignment of the parties on a genuine basis could not have been accomplished without the break-up of the old organizations. But

the latter clung desperately to life and refused to stand aside. Fearing the effects, they could devise no better remedy than to make away with the cause, or at all events to ignore it. They organized a conspiracy of ambiguity and silence around the great national problem which cried for solution, and for a long series of years the used-up parties tried to hold their ground against the logic of events, by means of endless stratagems, falsehoods, and recantations. The Whig Organization was specially conspicuous for this attitude. By subordinating everything to the supreme preoccupation of keeping up its fabric, of remaining a national organization, it embraced the policy of the bat which showed the birds its wings and hobnobbed with the rats. These tactics appeared to succeed very well, even securing for it the Presidency of the Union at the election of 1848.

Split on slavery widening.

But hardly had the victors taken their seats at the banquet when the spectre of slavery appeared, in a menacing, terrifying attitude. The slaveholders were becoming more and more aggressive in their wish to extend the territorial area of slavery; they even talked of breaking up the Union. At the same time in the Northern States the revolt of men's consciences against slavery and the pretensions of its supporters was growing more formidable and causing a deeper and deeper split in the Whig ranks. To avert the split the Organization hit on the ingenious plan of "agreeing to disagree," and of continuing to fly the Whig colours. But the irremediable division between the southern Whigs and the anti-slavery Whigs was breaking out on every occasion. The national convention of 1852 tried to bring about an apparent agreement between them by a

supreme quibble, selecting a colourless candidate, a "military hero," to please the North, and adopting a programme to suit the South, almost the same as that which the Democratic convention had approved a fortnight previously. This was the last straw; the southern Whigs thought it safer to vote for the Democratic candidate who was of the same timber as the platform; the opponents of the extension of slavery mustered behind an independent candidate, and there remained only a Whig minority which consented to "support the candidate while spitting upon the platform on which he stood." This candidate was beaten, and the "Whig party" was left on the field. The Organization did not despair of bringing it to life again. A more frightful decomposition only set in.

Special anti-slavery parties.

22. A number of Whigs who had a sincere hatred of slavery, who preferred human liberty to the integrity of the party, had not waited for this crisis to leave the Whig Organization and take their stand on a plain, straightforward anti-slavery platform. But for many a long year they had to fight not only to defend and to propagate their opinions, but even for their right to organize themselves on this particular footing. The conception of parties as kinds of churches taking charge of all the manifold moral interests of the faithful, of their whole soul considered for this purpose as one and indivisible, had sunk so deep into the public mind that the mere fact of forming a party to champion a particular cause, and nothing but that cause, seemed in itself wicked, immoral in the highest degree; people do not join a church to affirm their belief in a single dogma. The first anti-slavery organization, which was formed

under the name of the "Liberty party," therefore felt bound to place on record a formal abjuration of this heresy, in its platform of 1843, without success, however. When the movement launched by the Liberty party took a fresh start, just before the presidential election of 1848, in the form of the "Free Soil party," its adherents, who came mostly from the Whig side, were branded as "renegades and apostates," while even sincere opponents of the extension of slavery, such as Benton, thought the notion of a party of this kind, "founded on a single idea," simply absurd.

Birth of the Republican party.

Eventually the disgust inspired by the behaviour of the Whig party drove most of its supporters out of it. A few Whig fragments were still left here and there, which refused to dissolve, like reptiles which have been crushed and whose severed joints still give signs of life. But soon they mingled with the dust, the road was clear, and all the opponents of the extension of slavery, the number of whom increased with marked rapidity towards 1854, under the provocations of the slaveholders, were able to meet freely, however different their origin and however divergent their opinions on other subjects. This body soon received the name of the "Republican" party. Born in the States of the West, where party organization was less developed than in the East, and where consequently more facilities existed for spontaneous popular movements, it spread, about the year 1856, over the whole North. As soon as there arose, on the one side, a living organization, sincere and straightforward, the forces massed on the other side were bound to take as well a decided line.

23. The Democratic Organization, likewise divided

Break-up of the Democratic Organization.

against itself on the question of slavery, was in its turn instrumental in preventing a realignment of parties. In the contingents of the Democratic party formed under Jackson the slavocrats of the South were in a minority; the majority, contributed mainly by the North and the North-West, was not favourable to the extension of slavery, but from 1844 onwards the minority took the helm in consequence of the change of front of the Democratic national convention, which threw over Van Buren and adopted a candidate favourable to the annexation of Texas, to avoid risking the fruits of the victory, the "spoils." After having delivered the party to the slaveholding minority, the Organization maintained the uneven alliance between the two sections by means of expedients and manœuvres. The Democratic national conventions played in this conjuncture a game much resembling that of the Whig conventions.

That could not, however, last long. The slaveholders, more and more overswayed by the development of free labour in the Territories and unnerved by the increasing opposition of opinion in the free States, felt the ground slipping from beneath their feet and resolved to play their last card. Being accustomed to drag the northern politicians at their heels by the mere threat of seceding from the party and the Union, they demanded from the Federal authority a formal acknowledgment of the right to own slaves in all the Territories just like any other property. The northern politicians could not comply with this new demand without losing most of their supporters in the North, and the split occurred. It came to a head at the national convention

of the party, which met in 1860, at Charleston. It was in vain that the delegates from the North brought forward a wire-drawn programme of the kind which national conventions knew so well how to concoct. The southern delegates withdrew, met in a separate convention, and adopted an out-and-out slavery programme. The semblance of union in the party disappeared; the long struggle between the ambiguous situation kept up by the Organization and the naked truth of the slaveholders' aspirations was at an end.

The South takes to arms.

The break-up of the old organizations now being accomplished, the principle of liberty on the one side and that of slavocracy on the other could stand up, meet face to face, and fight it out. But the conflict could no longer be settled in a peaceful way; it was too late for that; the South had gone too far in its pretensions to allow itself to be non-suited by a simple electoral verdict. Finding itself more and more driven into a corner by the world of freedom rising out of the "great desert of the West," and feeling their "domestic institution" in danger in spite of the verbal arrangements devised by the party organization, the South was obliged to be always seeking new fulcrums, to be continually raising its terms. And slavocracy daily became the more aggressive and intractable, because the resistance to it was a succession of concessions. It was confronted solely by parties ready to do anything to prolong their existence and follow the lead of organizations which, with love of the Union always on their lips, were only venal go-betweens. When the election of Lincoln to the Presidency announced the victory of the party of princi-

ples, slavocracy thought the death-knell of its sway in the Union had sounded, and it denounced the Federal compact; the North flew to arms to defend the integrity of the Union; and the slavery conflict was left to the arbitrament of blood and iron.

FOURTH CHAPTER

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONVENTION SYSTEM
(continued)

The Organization during the Civil War.

24. In the crisis brought on by the slavery question the old parties foundered, but the system of organization by which they made head against wind and tide survived them. The "Republicans," who represented the fresh current in the life of the parties, adopted the machinery of the organization in vogue. It was in such common use that it commanded acceptance almost like a natural phenomenon, and indeed a party whose origins were so laborious, and which had to contend against such powerful opponents, could not but gain by adopting an organization, ready to hand, of the type sanctioned by popular habits. But in proportion as the power of the new party increased, it attracted to itself the professionals and the political parasites who try to feed on the vital substance of parties; the machinery of conventions, which they had learnt to manipulate with such skill, gave them every facility for getting in. The moral principles which lay at the root of the "Republican" party, and the lofty enthusiasm which inspired its adherents, precluded the self-seeking politicians from becoming the masters of it, but they none the less formed a considerable element in the party. In the nomination of Lincoln, wire-pulling was at least as

great a factor as spontaneousness and devotion to principles. Indeed, this selection was determined by considerations of "availability," in accordance with the tradition of national conventions; but for once in a way the wire-pullers of the convention were mistaken; Lincoln turned out to be a man of courage, of force of will, and of moral grandeur such as is seldom met with in history.

However, if these eminent qualities helped him to overcome the formidable rebellion of the South, he could make but little use of them against the political traditions bequeathed by the old party organizations, — against rotation and the spoils system. The secession flung most of the Democrats on the side of the enemies of the Union; the Republican party remained its chief, if not sole, prop, and the very safety of the Union seemed to demand that the Republican party should be supported at all hazards, and that public posts should be entrusted exclusively to its adherents. So the horde of office-seekers, whose principal claim was their "Republicanism," soon won the day. To make room for them one of the most appalling hecatombs of officials known in the history of the American public service was carried out.

Conditions in the South before the war.

25. After the war the Republican organization invaded the South. This section had hitherto almost escaped from the system introduced by the Jacksonian democracy after the eclipse of the leadership embodied in the Legislative Caucus. The social and economic conditions which favoured the establishment and the development of the popular party organization in the North and in the West did not exist in the South. The South and the rest of the Union formed practically two

nations, two different races, each with a distinct civilization. With the steam era in full swing, the slave-holding South remained an essentially agricultural country, of scattered populations, and relatively few and unimportant urban agglomerations. Slave labour excluded all free effort, and kept the South apart from the economic movement which carried away the North and the West in a sort of whirlwind. It prevented the rise of a powerful middle class, composed of small farmers, like those who constituted the moral force of New England, of captains of industry, of manufacturers, of leading merchants, of superior artisans, who drew from their material independence and from the success achieved by their dogged and untrammelled will the consciousness of their dignity as men and citizens. Immediately beneath a somewhat limited number of planters, in addition to the coloured slaves, came a wretched mass of men of white race, "mean whites," sunk in ignorance and poverty, physically free, but kept by their wretchedness in a close economical and political dependence on the planters. The latter, as the sole possessors of wealth, formed a ruling class in the State which was the flat negation of democracy; the republican form required by the Constitution of the Union covered in the South an oligarchical power wielded by a few thousand rich planters. Drawing into their orbit the less wealthy planters and the men of liberal professions in the cities, this class wielded an absolute social and political leadership. The whole southern society was a sort of vast family or clan, in which the younger members followed their elders spontaneously and naturally.

This state of things was anything but favourable to the birth and development of the two primordial elements of political life in the Northern States, that is to say, of the democratic formalism which took possession of the public mind, and of the race of mercenary politicians who, under cover of this formalism, laid hands on the political machinery. The great mass of voters had no need of the abstract notion of "regularity" and of cut-and-dried resolutions of the would-be representative conventions for shaping their policy; they followed implicitly the men to whom they were bound as if by feudal ties every great family had its political following, with a crowd of dependents, great and small, who rushed up at the first summons. Again, even apart from the restrictions on the suffrage which prevailed in the old States of the South, politics and the principal public functions were practically a monopoly of the ruling class. Politics were for this class not so much a career as a vocation; young members of good families were initiated into it at an early age, and tempered their southern ardour in the controversies of the day on constitutional law in which the women themselves took an interest. It was almost always from this class, and from among the men who gravitated towards it, that the members of the legislative assemblies, and of Congress in particular, were recruited. The other elective functions were few in number; most of the offices were filled up by the executive or by the Legislature.

Convention system of small importance.

The need, therefore, of a party election machinery did not make itself felt here to the same extent as in the North and in the West, and the convention system did not acquire the same importance in the South. Very

often the candidates came forward of their own accord, without having received the investiture of any convention, a thing which had become well-nigh a physical impossibility in the North. Nor was there the same need, in the South, of the committees which canvassed the voters in concert with the candidates. The candidates as a rule did not meddle with electioneering; their special field of activity was the stump, and in debates with the rival candidates they treated the public and themselves to tournaments of eloquence which flattered their chivalrous tastes. The victor in the debate was afterwards the victor at the polls. While monopolizing politics, the members of the ruling class did not use public office as a source of personal gain; they looked on it as a means of gratifying their dignity, their pride.

Spoils system transplanted into the South.

26. All this was changed after the Civil War, when the victors gave the suffrage to the whole ignorant and degraded mass of freed negroes and cut off the old leadership by depriving the men who had pronounced for secession of political rights. The old political society was dissolved; the new one presented only incoherent elements. The Republican party undertook to bring them together, as much with a view to consolidate the results of the victory, and in particular the emancipation of the negroes, as to keep itself permanently in power. For this purpose it made use of the party organization in vogue in the North. The negroes adapted themselves to it with extraordinary rapidity; without understanding anything of the issues of politics, they grasped its externals admirably, the devices and stratagems of organization, the dodges and tricks of

procedure at the meetings, — and in a short time they manœuvred in the conventions and the committees like veterans. They were controlled by whites, some of whom had hurried down from the Northern States, and who got the nickname of "carpet-baggers," since become famous, from their exasperated opponents. These adventurers found associates on the spot in the "mean whites," released from their old social ties by the fall of the slave power (the "Scalawags," as they were called in the South), and with the help of the negroes enrolled in the Republican organization, got into possession of the electoral machine. When installed in power, the negroes and their white mentors indulged in an unprecedented robbery of the public purse. They made the Legislatures issue bonds on the State to provide for public works which were never taken in hand, and shared the proceeds among themselves, leaving the taxpayers to submit to fresh taxation; they openly passed fraudulent disbursements or swelled the expenses incurred for furnishing offices, etc., in the wildest fashion, fitting them up, for instance, with clocks at $480 apiece, with chandeliers at $650. The official posts were distributed among illiterates; in one State there were more than two hundred negro magistrates unable to read or write; justice was openly bought and sold.

While the local leaders of the Organization, most of them vulgar spoilsmen, were absorbed in plunder, the great chiefs pulled the strings from Washington, settled the candidatures for the most important posts in the Southern States, and made the leaders of these States manœuvre to suit the requirements of their policy, not

knowing exactly, or not wishing to know, what was going on under the rule of the carpet-baggers. The Republican Organization had to be supported in the South at all costs. The Federal government itself, the administration of President Grant, on more than one occasion placed the military at the disposal of the Organization in its election struggles.

"Solid South."

27. The misdeeds of the Republican Organization exploiting the negro vote soon flung almost all the respectable white population into opposition; the humiliation of being governed by the slaves of yesterday, and of being ruthlessly plundered by their leaders, the carpet-baggers and scalawags, made the whites forget all their political differences, and they united under the flag of the Democratic party, without giving a thought to its principles, but simply because it was the opposite of the Republican party, of the party of the blacks. They voted invariably for the measures and the candidates of the Democratic party, good or bad. The whole South solidified into this attitude, which got it the nickname of "Solid South." Political formalism invaded its whole existence. The comparative freedom from party spirit which existed before the war in local elections, and to some extent even in others, disappeared altogether. Party organization, so loose in the South before the war, was made supreme there, together with its system of "regular" nominations.

The whites, entrenched behind the Organization of the Democratic party, had soon succeeded *per fas et nefas* in dislodging the Republicans in the South and in reducing the negroes to impotence. The Solid South still continued to exist; the politicians watched

over it, in order not to lose their situation. Having appeared on the scene in the form of carpet-baggers, of scalawags, and of subaltern negro politicians all hoisting the Republican standard, they installed themselves soon in the opposite camp as well. Though the old Democratic leaders of the South have recovered their ascendency, they could not exert their political influence in the old way after the suffrage was extended and the party Organization system was developed throughout the country. They needed numerous intermediaries between themselves and the mass of the voters. The vacant place was at once taken by mercenaries unfurling the Democratic flag.

The general pacification and the marvellous economic transformation undergone by the South after the war only improved the chances of the professional politicians, by concentrating the vital forces of the country in industry and commerce, and by making its politico-social situation like that of the North. In order not to be disturbed in the enjoyment of the spoils, the politicians made the populations, in spite of the profound changes that had ensued, keep their old positions. They went on, the one side sounding the alarm against "negro domination," and the other "waving the bloody shirt" of the war waged against the "rebels." As the danger was supposed to be still standing, the faithful of the parties were bound to go on voting for them blindly, and not only in the South, but everywhere where there were "Republicans" and "Democrats." The whole Union was thus identified with the *Solid South*, for the greater benefit of the party organization. Several other effects of the war, which went far beyond the new state

of things created in the South, added a new impetus to the Organization.

Economic expansion.

28. The war introduced profound changes into the whole national existence; it imparted a new character to its political, economical, and moral relations. The political life of the Union was marked by an excessive development of centralization. The authority of the Union over the States increased as much in the constitutional domain as in the everyday political life. Economic life exhibited a still greater concentration. The extension of railroads and telegraphs made distances of little account, and did away with the comparative isolation in which the populations of the States had hitherto lived. The great industrial undertakings created by a colossal combination of small capital stretched from one end of the Union to the other. Carried along, forces and activities underwent an unprecedented expansion. Restored to peace, the country plunged with ardour into the pursuit of wealth, of money-making. Speculation invaded everything. Tastes and appetites were freely indulged in. Success, or the craving for success, seemed to justify anything.

Materialism disguised in inflated party feeling.

To this coarse materialism was added the unbounded enthusiasm aroused by the war. Enormous sacrifices had been made to save the Union; millions of slaves had been given their liberty; people prided themselves on it; they got drunk with patriotism all the more readily and sincerely because it concealed better the decline of the national character. And to turn this patriotism to account, the feelings which it inspired were invested, so to speak, in the party of the Union, — the Republican party, — like capital to fructify; all the

moral enthusiasm accumulated in the struggle was deposited with the party, and party feeling increased in volume. Powerful enough before the war, it was already almost a superstition; now it became a passion. Engendered by conventionality and selfish rivalries, it cast off its impurities in the crucible of civil war and appeared in a sort of ideal glow. This exaltation of party feeling only delivered the citizen more effectually, bound hand and foot, into the power of the party embodied in its Organization.

Party devoid of genuine life. The "Machine."

While the moral sources of its influence extended, the Organization secured important improvements in its machinery in the direction of centralization, which increased its material hold on the mass of voters. Favoured by the exceptional extension of railroads and the telegraph, the enlarged centralization knit all the parts of the Organization more strongly together and drew closer the bonds which united the party followers. But with that the Organization remained more than ever devoid of spontaneous and genuine life. The absolute power of the small cliques of managers, who settled everything behind the scenes, revived and applied to the democratized system of party organization the old appellation of Caucus, in the sense of secret meeting, of cabal. The professional politicians operated, under the direction of the managers and the wire-pullers, with such uniformity and with such indifference or insensibility to right and wrong, that they evoked the idea of a piece of mechanism working automatically and blindly, — of a machine. The effect appeared so precisely identical that the term "Machine" was bestowed on the Organization as a nickname,

which it bears down to the present day, even in preference to that of "Caucus."

The Executive and the Organization.

29. Drawing in its tow the whole electorate, the Organization could all the more easily thrust itself on the public authorities created by election. The Executive, which disposed of the places in the Federal service required by the Organization for feeding its machine, was of particular consequence to it. Since the introduction of the spoils system, the Organization had always pressed heavily on the exercise of the presidential patronage. It was the Organization of the party, a convention of its delegates, which had nominated the President, having taken him, perhaps, out of obscurity; the innumerable committees of this Organization had worked up the electorate to vote for him; in short, he was its creature. Could he forget this in power? had he not contracted obligations to its leaders, even without having entered into any explicit engagement? Lincoln himself, when grappling with this fatal situation, had to give in on more than one occasion. It is therefore not surprising that the successors of the great President should not have exhibited more firmness. The anxiety about re-election, which haunts almost every President in his first term, could not but increase their conciliatoriness towards the local leaders of the Organization. But personal obligations were not the only ones which the President contracted towards them. The party system, developed and intensified by the Caucus, made the chief of the State a party chief, or a trustee, who, on entering the White House, received the fortunes of the party as a deposit. As the party's success at the elections depended on the efficiency of the Organization,

the President had to take good care not to weaken the latter, not to damp the zeal and ardour of the numerous workers who led the electoral troops. Consequently when, after the battle, a local leader requested the President to give his lieutenants places, for which he had already pledged himself to them, the President had no alternative but to comply; if he refused, he ruined the political credit of the local leaders, as well as the chances of the party in the district.

Lastly, the necessities of the constitutional situation obliged the President to seek the support of the members of Congress. It was of no avail that the Constitution established the separation of powers, organized the legislative, the executive, and the judiciary, — as co-ordinate powers counterbalancing each other. The more the Union developed, the more complex its political life grew, the less possible did it become for the Legislature and the Executive to act separately or at a distance from each other. Whether it was a matter of legislation or of the annual appropriations of the budget, the Executive had to treat with the Legislature. Besides, the Legislature was given a formal hold on the Executive by the Constitution itself, which in certain specified cases had deviated from the principle of the separation of powers by making the ratification of treaties and of appointments to the more important offices subject to the approval of the Senate. Closely pressed on various sides by the Legislature, the Executive was obliged to yield, and, in order to live, was reduced to purchasing the support of the members of Congress with the favours at its disposal. Towards the middle of the nineteenth century this practice became a regular one,

and Pierce and Buchanan bought legislation like an article of commerce with the places which they distributed to the *protégés* of the Senators and the Representatives.

United States Senate the stronghold of the Organization.

At the same time the Legislature became the stronghold of the leaders of the party Organization. The seats in Congress being the highest electoral prize that could be won, with the assistance of the Organization, its local managers naturally coveted them for themselves, and when the Machine acquired the strength which enabled it to operate with certainty, it systematically placed them in these important elective positions. They were, therefore, the persons to reap the benefit of the superiority gained by the Legislature over the Executive. Disguised as members of Congress, the managers of the Organization forced the Executive to make over the whole Federal patronage to them. First came the Senators, to whom their constitutional power, as well as the special prestige attaching to their character of representatives of sovereign States, gave more influence. They regularly took in hand the distribution of offices in their States. The Senate, which, under the terms of the Constitution, was entrusted with the duty of confirming by a majority the important presidential appointments, had admitted, by the unwritten law of the "courtesy of the Senate," the exclusive right of the Senators of each State to approve or reject the proposals of the President relating to their State; consequently all the other Senators concurred with their colleague without looking into the case. Under the circumstances it was useless for the President to ignore the recommendations of the Senators. In practice this state of affairs

admitted of a good many exceptions, but, generally speaking, it amounted to the President having the signature and the Senator the choice. In the last analysis the government established by the Constitution found itself deprived of one of its essential functions, for the benefit of a private organization which confronted it henceforward as a sort of counter-government.

Conditions under Grant;

30. Such was the situation when Grant took up his abode in the White House. His immense prestige, and the unbounded confidence of the Republican masses who had carried him into power, could do nothing against it. After a few half-hearted attempts at resistance, he became its accomplice. The Organization allowed freer scope than ever to the mercenary contingents which filled its ranks, and started on a new era of scandals and corruption in public life, which recalled and surpassed the worst days of Jackson. Nor did public opinion, in the main, protest; it made no sign, hypnotized by the imaginary dangers which threatened the Union from the "rebel" South. "Men went on fearing the dead lions of secession and slavery more than the living dogs of political corruption." With Grant in power, people were at all events sure that the order of things established by his victories would not be impugned; and then, business was not bad, money was easily made.

under Hayes;

Grant's successor, Hayes, who got in at the national convention as a dark horse, proved himself thoroughly honest. Accepting the nomination, he declared himself an opponent of the spoils system: "It ought to be abolished. The reform should be thorough, radical, and complete." After his election he set to work

resolutely to carry out his promises. But thereupon most of the leaders of the party which brought him into power, the managers of the Organization, rose up against him. At the instigation of the head of the Organization of New York and Senator of that State, Roscoe Conkling, the Senate, making use of its right to reject the presidential appointments, held in check the President and paralyzed his efforts for the liberation of the public service from the politicians. Hayes lost heart and began to give way. For one good appointment he made two bad ones, under the pressure of the Machine. The behaviour of the Organization became more decent, but the Machine was still in full swing.

under Garfield;

Edified by Hayes' experience, his successor, Garfield, showed no intention of taking the bestowal of offices out of the hands of members of Congress. But while lending himself to the spoils system, he provoked, from his very accession, the violent animosity of Roscoe Conkling for having made a few appointments without reference to, or even against the wish of, the famous New York Senator, who, however, was not forgotten. A grave conflict broke out between the President and the Senator, which disclosed the lengths to which the insolent pretensions of the powerful leaders of the Machine could go. In the meanwhile the appetites aroused by the spoils brought about a far more serious collision; among the horde of office-seekers who invaded Washington, one, being disappointed or having lost patience, assassinated the President. The shock given to opinion by this tragic death helped to make Congress pass a law which withdrew from the favouritism of the administration, or, what came to the same thing, from the

exigencies of members of Congress, a certain number of offices by having them filled by competitive examinations. This reform, carried in 1883, was the starting-point of an important movement in the political life of the United States, as will be seen in a subsequent chapter, but it could not restore the free use of the presidential prerogative in regard to appointments and cancel the encroachments of Congressmen. Meanwhile, it is enough to point out that the offices for which the President appoints with the consent of the Senate have not been affected by the new law, the intervention of the Senate in these cases being prescribed by the Constitution.

under Cleveland;

31. For the moment the actual effect produced by the awakening of public opinion was to detach enough supporters from the Republican Organization to put an end to the monopoly of power which it had enjoyed for nearly a quarter of a century, and bring into the Presidency, under the Democratic flag, a man of undaunted courage and incorruptible honesty, Grover Cleveland. But the career of this President even, which shed such a lustre on the independent exercise of the executive power, gave the best possible proof of how difficult, not to say impossible, it was for the President, in the state of things described above, to curb the Organization of the party. On great economic problems, such as the currency and customs-duties, which directly affected the material well-being of the masses and kept their susceptibility on the alert, the President made a brave fight with the factious Senate, especially during his second term (1893–1897). When it was a question of appointments to offices, this bellicose ardour

cooled down, and was tempered by mutual concessions.

under Harrison;

The Republican President who filled the Democratic interregnum between Cleveland's first and second Presidency, Benjamin Harrison, reverted to the worst traditions of the spoils system. In the space of one year, thirty thousand employees of the postal department were changed, for no other reason than that they were Democrats. The prostitution of public offices to the party and its myrmidons reached its highest pitch by spreading to the Cabinet itself, which was put up to auction, as it were; the proprietor of a large dry-goods store in Philadelphia was rewarded with a post in the Cabinet for having supplied the committee that conducted the presidential campaign with a considerable sum of money, a great part of which was notoriously employed in purchasing votes. A precedent was created, and similar things occurred under each of the subsequent administrations, under both Cleveland and McKinley.

under McKinley and Roosevelt.

The general attitude of McKinley towards the spoils system was anything but revolutionary. Taught by the experience of his predecessor, Cleveland, he wished above all things to live in peace with the Senate and his party, and from the very beginning he resigned his power of appointing to offices in favour of the members of Congress as meekly and as completely as if the practice were formally prescribed by the Constitution. His successor, Roosevelt, with all his courage, all his energy, and his immense popularity in the country, did not succeed better than Cleveland in restraining the Senate in the disposal of the Federal patronage. Besides,

he did not want at all to quarrel with the Organization of the party, and while displaying a certain independence he strove to act in harmony with it and to please it.

Political assessments.

32. Retaining in fact the nominations to public offices, the party Organization made of the officers its humble servants. In the election campaigns they placed all their influence at its disposal and were the hardest "workers." Not content with these personal exertions, the Organization bethought itself early of subjecting the officials to a direct and proportional tax. This practice crept in under Democratic administrations, during the decade 1840–1850, timidly and slowly, wrapped in secrecy. In the course of the next decade it increased to a great extent, and under Buchanan it was already thoroughly established. But it was left to the Republican Machine, after the war, to bring the contribution, or rather extortion, system to perfection. The Machine did so with perfect calmness and unconcern. The Federal office-holders throughout the Union were obliged to pay a percentage on their salaries as a contribution euphemistically described as "voluntary." Before long there were no fewer than five categories of "assessments" — Federal, State, municipal, ward, and district — inflicted on the hapless employees, many of whom were often taxed by more than one committee.

The ostensible object of these assessments was to defray the expenses of the election campaign, such as outlay for printing, postage, and other lawful disbursements. Part of the money collected was really used for this purpose, but most of it went to corrupt voters and to local managers of the Machine and their "workers."

The reason alleged for making the assessed pay up was the necessity of preventing the accession to power of the opposite party, which would turn them out and give their places to its adherents. But the fear of being removed by their own party or of spoiling their chances of promotion, if they refused to contribute, acted with more force on the office-holders. Neither pecuniary position, age, nor sex, found mercy with the collectors of the committees. Every one who figured on the pay-roll of a public department was put under contribution, — office-boys, dock-labourers, washerwomen, not to mention schoolmasters and schoolmistresses. As a rule the Organization of the Republican party in power could count on the indifference or even the connivance of the government. Grant and his successor, Hayes, had, it is true, issued orders prohibiting the payment of assessments, but they remained a dead letter.

Under the pressure of public opinion, which as time went on became less tolerant of these abuses, the law of 1883, already referred to, providing for admission to the Federal service by competitive examination, tried to cure the evil of political assessments by prohibiting them under penalties. This law checked the evil, but was far from putting an end to it.

Virtual sale of nominations.

The assessments levied on the office-holders found a counterpart in the contributions demanded from candidates for election. The prejudice, or the principle, if that expression is preferred, of "regularity" having made it impossible for any aspirant to an elective office to come before the voters without the introduction of a party Organization, which confers the stamp of regu-

lar candidate, the Machines found themselves able to apply the practice of assessments to candidates with even greater success and certainty than to office-holders. The pretext of election expenses was a more plausible one in the case of candidates, and they had always contributed more or less to the party funds; but before the war these contributions were fairly moderate, sometimes even extremely small. With the development of the Machine the pecuniary contributions of the candidates were made strictly compulsory, and raised to exorbitant figures, which often exceeded the total of what the office aspired to could bring in, at least by fair means.

In the large cities, with New York at their head, practice established a sort of tariff for each set of offices, according to the length of the term and the importance of the place. Thus a judgeship, that is to say, the nomination to it, amounted to $15,000; a seat in Congress was rated at $4000; for membership of a State Legislature $1500 was demanded; a like amount for the position of alderman in a city council, etc. The impossibility of getting into the public service by any other channel resulted in a good many perfectly respectable and competent men consenting to pay the assessments. But many others got admission under cover of the assessment system who were neither competent nor honest and were rather inclined to get all they could out of their place during the short elective term. The higher ranks of the judiciary itself were not spared, and there were judges (happily the case was not very common) whose sole claim was the contribution paid to the Machine. Thus the public service,

which was so deeply degraded by the practices of rotation and division of the spoils, received another deadly blow at the hands of the Caucus by the assessment system. Public functions were virtually put up to auction. The Organization assumed the full aspect of which the outline had long been rising into view: from a political combination in the service of a party, it had come down to an industrial concern for making money out of places; it bought votes, worked up this raw material into elective offices, and resold them with its trade-mark to the highest bidder.

FIFTH CHAPTER

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONVENTION SYSTEM
(conclusion)

Commercial exploitation of public offices developed.

33. THE traffic in places was only the first stage of the industrialism with which the Caucus was to imbue American public life. It was followed by the exploitation of the influence which those offices involved and especially of the power over the public moneys which they conferred. The case of office-holders procuring, in return for a commission, government orders, contracts for public works, etc., was known before the war, but on a comparatively slender scale, and in a sporadic fashion, so to speak. After the war, these practices developed to the highest extent and were reduced to a system by prevaricating officials allied to jobbers and speculators. These combinations of plundering politicians soon became tolerably common under the name of "Rings." Their operations were particularly favoured by the marvellous development of the whole country, and especially of the cities, with the manifold branches of their government and their works of every kind, daily increasing in number and importance. The Rings appeared in the first instance, and with the greatest force, in the city of New York, which was the first to develop the Machine, and has produced the

Rings.

most finished specimen of it in the form of Tammany Hall. The part which this Organization has played there is so thoroughly representative of the action of the Machine in municipal government that it is necessary to become acquainted with Tammany Hall, and even to linger for a moment on its history.

Origins of Tammany Society.

Its origins are a mixture of fable and history. It got its name from a legendary chief of an Indian tribe, Tammany, or Tammanend, a great warrior, a high-minded ruler, an illustrious sage. When the colonists shook off the English yoke, their imagination travelled back to this hero sprung from the very land which they wished to wrest from the despot beyond the seas, and they placed themselves under the patronage of Tammanend's memory. He was canonized there and then, and the revolutionary army adopted the cult of St. Tammany, with a saint's day which was held on the 12th of May, the supposed day of his birth. From the army this cult passed into civil society, in which patriots, and foremost among them the "Sons of Liberty," founded St. Tammany associations, for cultivating the love of country and of the Republic under the invocation of the legendary hero. In imitation of the first Tammany Society, founded at Philadelphia in 1772, several others were created, at New York, at Baltimore, and elsewhere, but that of New York alone survived.

This society was founded in 1789 with the title of "The Tammany Society or Columbian Order." Created as a secret society, the members of which were admitted and initiated with certain rites, Tammany adopted a singular organization with an Indian nomen-

clature intended to give prominence to its eminently American character; it was divided into thirteen tribes, corresponding in number to the States which formed the Union, each named after an animal, — tiger, fox, wolf, eagle, etc. The managing committee of the society was composed of thirteen "sachems" (chiefs), one of whom was a "grand sachem" or "great father"; a "sagamore" officiated as master of the ceremonies, and a "wiskinskie" discharged the more modest duties of doorkeeper. The members were called "braves"; the place where they met bore the name of "wigwam."

Tammany enters into politics.

34. During the early years of its existence the society maintained the character of a purely patriotic and philanthropic association which it had assumed. But before long politics crept into it. The frankly democratic tendencies of the society drew it towards the Jeffersonian party and induced it to join in the great electoral contest of 1800. From and after this date Tammany took an ever increasing share in the contests which filled the public life of New York. It was the centre of the humbler voters, attracted by its popular tendencies and kept together by the social cement of its gatherings and brotherly feasts. The suffrage in New York being subject to a property qualification (down to 1821), these voters belonged not so much to the populace as to the lower middle class and to the category of artisans, and it was from men of the middle class that they received their impulse. For a long time, therefore, the Tammany Society preserved a decided stamp of respectability.

Two great facts radically changed the character and tendencies of Tammany. The introduction of universal

suffrage, effected in 1821, created a new atmosphere, in which democratic aspirations, being now gratified, lost their mystic fragrance, and in which the Puritan spirit of the toiling lower middle class evaporated. Tammany was invaded by the mob element. Again, the voting strength which the Tammany organization contributed to the Republican-Democratic party soon made its services appreciated and gained them rewards in the form of places handed over to its members. These *latifundia* ruined Tammany morally, while developing and confirming its power. They attracted to and permanently established in Tammany the mercenary elements. Towards the year 1835 Tammany's entrance on this path was an accomplished fact.

Its sway over the Democratic party.

35. The establishment of the popular system of conventions, together with the extension of the elective method to public functions, placed the Democratic party, which Tammany claimed to represent, irrevocably in its power: the followers of Tammany flocked into the primaries and the conventions, and laid hold of the nominations which every orthodox Democrat ratified on election day by his ballot. Tammany was now the *regular* organization of the Democratic party. And as the majority of the population of the city of New York was connected by tradition with the Democratic party, Tammany became the master of the city and of its municipal administration. Soon it gained considerable reinforcements from the European immigration. The tide of immigration, which, entering through New York, spread over the whole Union, left in that city, as a sort of residuum, the most wretched, the feeblest, portion of the human cargo dumped down on

the shores of America. This class of immigrants, composed for the most part of Irishmen, was marked out as the prey of the leaders of Tammany in search of heedless or corrupt votes; they let themselves be enrolled by it like so many sheep, and by their ever increasing number formed a sort of rock, which served henceforth as a foundation for the power of Tammany. Ruled with military discipline, the popular contingents at its command carried invariably the nominations and the elections, in case of need, by fraud and violence. It was an army of democratic mamelukes, who bolstered up, under republican forms, a real system of despotism, wielded by a handful of men. To support this army Tammany had the disposal not only of a great number of places in the municipal administration, but of a large war fund provided by the assessments which it began to levy at an early date. It was Tammany, one may say, which inaugurated the system since naturalized throughout the Union. It pitilessly squeezed all those who obtained or expected a nomination through its good offices.

The respectable citizens, too engrossed by their own affairs, did not interfere, not realizing what was going on, or they deliberately winked at the wrong-doings of Tammany out of love for the party; it supplied the party with compact majorities at the State and presidential elections, and the Democratic leaders, even the most eminent of them, endured it when they were not cajoling it. Its character of the *regular* organization of the party rendered it unassailable from within. The members of the Democratic party who were hostile to Tammany, or who were simply dissentients, had no

resource but schism or alliance with the opposite party. They tried both. In the course of the last seventy years there have occurred, in fact, more than one rebellion against Tammany in the Democratic ranks, but they have had no lasting success. For the most part these revolts and secessions came from family quarrels. The spoils being of course not enough to go round, those who considered themselves hardly used discovered that Tammany was a corrupt organization, and appealed to the indignation of good citizens. Sometimes the Republicans thought it a good opportunity for joining the malcontents and inflicting a defeat on Tammany Hall, but the Republican Organization was intent only on the spoils and was quite ready to sell itself to Tammany for a mess of pottage.

Tweed's Ring.

36. The use which Tammany made of its power, especially during the period after the war, had nothing in common with the interests of the party under the banner of which it operated; considerations of political principle or propriety were utterly foreign to it. Its sole aim was to secure and exploit the vast material resources of the city. In this the Tammany men displayed an unexampled rapacity and effrontery. All the plunderer rings made Tammany their base.

The most famous of those Rings was that formed by a certain Tweed. This man, who with unheard-of audacity looted the capital of the New World, was in reality a vulgar rogue, whose name under ordinary circumstances would not have got beyond the reports of the police court. A chair-maker by trade, lazy and unskilful, Tweed soon gave up his business and all regular work and launched into speculation and caucus

politics. A jovial fellow, with a fund of vulgar *bonhomie* and an exuberant nature, he managed to make many friends among the lower orders of the city and to win supporters in the party Organization, which enabled him to obtain several elective posts, where he found opportunities for jobbery. But Tweed's ambitions, or rather appetites, were of no ordinary kind. Having come into contact, in the municipal life of New York, with a few individuals almost as obscure and just as greedy as himself, they spontaneously combined for the same object of laying hands on the city. But how were they to get a hold on it? They had no need to look for the lever of Archimedes; it was there, concealed in the party Organizations which distributed power. The strongest Organization was Tammany Hall (it was so called from the building where the famous society met), and the conspirators directed their steps towards it. By a series of skilful movements they made their way into its General Committee, became the masters of it, and from that moment the city of New York was virtually at their feet. Tweed and his three associates formed by themselves the managing Ring. Disposing through Tammany of nominations to offices, they filled the whole municipal administration with their creatures, raised to the bench worthless individuals who sold justice "like grocers," but who faithfully served the Ring by screening its offending *protégés* from the rigour of the law, or by granting it other favours. The members of the Ring took the most important and influential posts in the municipal administration for themselves.

Extensive public works served as a pretext for giving,

at the cost of the ratepayers, real or fictitious occupation to a mass of people, who in return carried out the political orders of the Ring. To enlarge the number of voters at its beck and call, the Ring procured naturalizations *en masse* of aliens in violation of the law. Moreover, it organized on an equally extensive scale a fraudulent registration of voters, by getting fictitious names put on the register, which were used afterwards for voting. At the poll the election inspectors appointed by the Ring made a false return. The Governor was the candidate of the Ring; the Legislature as well was on his side; Tweed himself held a seat there, he got himself elected senator and succeeded even in obtaining the chairmanship of the most important senatorial committee.

Its methods of plundering the city.

Screened on all sides, Tweed and his associates quietly robbed the city exchequer. For instance, they got friends to buy plots of land which the city afterwards acquired for public purposes at extravagant prices; or sent in fictitious claims, which the city paid without asking a question; or again, and very often, forced the contractors and tradesmen to swell the totals of the accounts and to hand them the difference between the real price and the invoice price. These last frauds were fabulous in their extent, and to them the building and furnishing of the law courts constitute an imperishable monument. According to the estimate, it was to cost $250,000, but it swallowed up from eight to thirteen millions, without being finished; each chair cost $407, and the rest in proportion.

The Ring carried on its operations for several years quite unchecked, the bribed Press keeping silence, and

the electorate being dragged at the heels of Tammany which it followed out of party loyalty or personal interest. The money embezzled by the leaders of the Ring flowed in a golden stream, as we are already aware, among a vast number of voters, in various forms, so that the latter only profited by the régime of plunder. Taxes they had none to pay; the rich paid them, and if *they* were fleeced, where was the harm? Quite accidentally some fraudulent accounts came to a newspaper, and the scandal burst out. The members of the Ring, by betraying one another to save their skin, facilitated the enquiry into their misdeeds, but considerable efforts were required to dislodge them. Unmasked and publicly convicted, Tweed snapped his fingers at public opinion and the law by asking: "What are you going to do about it?" and what was more characteristic, he was not left in the lurch, either by the troop of his lieutenants and sub-lieutenants, or by the voters of his district, who triumphantly re-elected him to the Senate of the State. Eventually the Ring was defeated at the municipal election, and its principal members and acolytes were prosecuted or forced to abscond or retire. The operations of the Ring cost the rate-payers $160,000,000 at the lowest computation; the consolidated debt of the city increased by more than $100,000,000, and the annual expenditure was doubled.

More refined methods of looting.

37. But the lesson was of little service to the city of New York; after a short time, when the champions of honest government got slack, Tammany recovered itself, and in 1874 it was once more in possession of the mayoralty. For a time Tammany was more careful

in the choice of its candidates, simply in order to lull the vigilance of the voters by making them believe that it had turned over a new leaf, although it confined these tactics only to the most conspicuous offices which headed the list. The rest of the ticket was filled up as before with corrupt or vulgar men, not excepting the members of the town council. On a larger or smaller scale the plundering was going on. Only, taught by Tweed's experience, his successors changed their *modus operandi;* they took care not to swell the taxes; but in return they developed a complete system of blackmailing. The principal instrument of this plunder was the police; they levied a regular toll, prescribed by a fixed tariff, on all the saloons, houses of ill-fame, and gambling-hells; extorted money, on false pretences or on no pretence at all, from small traders whom they had the power of molesting. Other perfectly lawful businesses were subjected to a tribute: steamboat companies, insurance societies, banks, etc., paid blackmail in return for the "protection" accorded to them. The police captains and even the policemen had to buy their places. "The government of the city in fact became a huge market, in which the officers might as well have sat at little tables and sold their wares openly."

The revelation of these scandals, due to the courageous initiative of private individuals, produced, in 1894, a revolt like that formerly directed against Tweed and his gang: the independent citizens and those Democrats who were indignant at or jealous of Tammany, having made common cause with the Republicans, the coalition defeated Tammany Hall and carried out a

cleansing process in the administration, in the ordinary as well as the metaphorical sense of the words; it reformed the police and had the streets swept, which under the Tammany régime had been left in a dirty state from motives of economy. But at the next election Tammany returned into power. In 1901 a formidable revolt led by the independents got the better of Tammany and installed in the city an honest reform administration with Mr. Seth Low at its head. But it was evidently too good for New York; after three years Tammany won back its power. At the last election, of 1909, Tammany still got in its nominee for the mayoralty, but its other candidates were defeated, and the city administration seems to breathe a fresher air.

Philadelphia Gas Ring.

38. This very summary sketch of the history of Tammany Hall and of the municipal administration of New York, which is indissolubly connected with it, certainly presents an extraordinary career, but by no means an exceptional one; the same features will be found in that of most of the large cities of the Union; Tammany has only exhibited them in a singularly exaggerated form. Moreover, some of these cities were not better off than New York, and had a history somewhat resembling that of Tammany Hall. Thus almost at the very moment when Tweed's Ring was being overthrown at New York, amid shouts of general indignation, in the second municipality of the Republic, in Philadelphia, a Ring was being installed which was to be master of the city for years to come. This was the Gas Ring, the most famous, next to Tammany's, in the annals of American municipal life. A few needy and ambitious individuals succeeded in

getting places in the municipal Gas Department. Having under their orders a very large number of employees and workmen (as many as two thousand), they conceived the idea of turning them into political agents. Methodically distributed among all the wards of the city, the Gas Department people filled the primaries and, thanks to their number and their discipline, secured majorities for the delegates whom their employers pointed out to them beforehand. No candidate hostile to the Ring could obtain a nomination. No one who had not given pledges to the Ring could be elected either to municipal assemblies, or even to the State Legislature or Congress. For the Ring, following the example of its prototype of New York, took care to ally itself with the dominant political party, which was in Philadelphia the Republican party. Finally the Ring managed to fill the whole municipal administration and most of the town councils with its creatures, and to plant its garrison in the State Legislature.

Once in power, the Gas Ring exploited the city exchequer just as methodically as, but with more prudence and decency than, the Tammany Ring; the controllers of the Gas Ring did not rob with the same effrontery as Tweed and Co. But the city of Philadelphia was no better off; its debt increased at the rate of three millions a year, without any important improvement being introduced into the municipal plant; "inefficiency, waste, badly paved and filthy streets, unwholesome and offensive water, and slovenly and costly management have been the rule for years past throughout the city government." The Ring manufactured majorities at the polls by means of frauds

in voting and in the counting of the ballots; it bought votes wholesale and retail, forcing all those who received salaries from the city to provide the wherewithal for corruption. The policemen themselves had to contribute. Like the Tammany Ring, the Gas Ring stopped the mouth of the Press by regular subsidies, so that not a single paper could be found to plead the cause of honest government. It took ten years of struggles to overthrow the Ring. But, as in New York, the triumph of the good citizens was not of long duration. The municipal administration once more fell under the yoke of the Machine, whose managers exploited it on more or less commercial lines. Abuses were not so flagrant, but extravagance nevertheless continued to characterize the municipal government of Philadelphia.

Graft in other cities.

39. Among the other large cities, several, especially Washington, New Orleans, San Francisco, Cincinnati, Chicago, were hardly better off than Philadelphia or New York in the matter of Rings. Elsewhere municipal disorders occurred on a smaller scale, but under almost similar conditions; that is to say, that wherever municipal resources whetted people's appetites, and a large population devoid of natural cohesion and public spirit, but abounding in floating and corrupt elements, and wedded to the notion of "regularity," could be easily taken in tow by the party Machine, the latter allowed the municipal property to become the prey of the boldest spirits. Almost all the cities whose population exceeded 100,000, or even a lesser figure, had their Rings. In the course of these last years many great cities, such as St. Louis, Minneapolis, San Francisco, added new pages of disgrace to the his-

tory of municipal corruption carried on under the flag of political parties. The methods were more or less the same; the only new thing about it was the expression of slang applied to that sort of corruption and to its artisans — *graft, grafters.*

When the scandals reached their highest pitch, or the burden of taxation became intolerable, the good citizens shook off their indifference, and marched against the enemies of the public weal entrenched behind the Machine of the predominant party. The independents combined with the rival party for this purpose, detached honest citizens from the party in power, and often succeeded in overthrowing the Ring. But as a general rule even the most successful of these revolts, the most victorious ones, were but incidents, which merely made a break in the continuity of the power of the Machine. Hardly freed from its yoke, the American cities for the most part soon fell under it again, for this simple reason, that the principal factors of the situation remained the same. When the anger provoked by the sudden revelation of the scandals calmed down, and when the vigilance of the good citizens began to tire, which was always pretty soon, the permanent forces on which the Machine rested, after having been in abeyance for a moment, asserted themselves once more.

Corporations and traffic in municipal franchises.

40. The direct exploitation of municipal interests, on the brutal methods popularized by Tweed, was at an early stage supplemented, and afterwards more and more replaced, by indirect exploitation. This last method was peculiarly favoured by the rise of joint-stock industrial concerns, of corporations, which un-

derwent extraordinary expansion after the war. A concentration of capital unprecedented in history made a comparatively limited number of capitalist combinations masters of most of the economic functions of the country. Daily spreading further and further, the companies overran the American continent all the more easily that the notions and the habits of individual freedom and non-intervention of the State, which had passed into dogmas, secured industrial liberty. While rendering great services to the community and developing its economic life with increasing force and rapidity, the corporations exhibited insatiable greed and, as it were, an innate tendency to push their way by trampling on the interests which crossed their path. They tried to create monopolies by crushing competition *per fas et nefas*. Having command of money, the corporations used it lavishly to buy the support and the connivance of which they stood in need.

Their operations were directed in the first place against municipal administration, with a view to obtaining from it concessions for street-cars, railways, railroads in transit, gas works, electrical supply, water works, etc. The companies more often than not managed to get these concessions or "franchises" gratis, or by payment of an absurdly small due; they bought the members of the city councils, which were generally filled, thanks to the Caucus, with politicians of a low stamp. The traffic in franchises became very common in the large cities; it created a particular type of city councillors, who acquired a melancholy popularity under the name of "boodle aldermen."

These municipal freebooters, organized in "rings" or "combines," were making money without taking it directly out of the pockets of the ratepayers, but the loss was none the less enormous to the latter; for if the companies had paid the cities for the franchises, or paid what they were worth, there would have been no need, as has been calculated in the case of New York, for instance, of municipal taxes to defray the city expenditure. While buying boodle aldermen directly, the corporations sometimes supplemented this resource by trying to pack the councils in their own way, intervening with their money in the primaries and the conventions, or subsidizing the party Machine to get the benefit of its influence with its nominees.

The great monopolies allied to the party Organizations.

41. Relations of this kind between the party Organizations and the corporations grew up especially in the larger sphere of State and Union, in which the big companies took their full scope. With interests extending over the economic surface of the country, and with an unquenchable thirst for gain, they needed still more the complaisance of Congress and of the State Legislatures. But to buy the members of those higher assemblies singly, as plain aldermen were bought, was not such an easy matter. The party Organizations very often provided a way of getting round them more cheaply and more effectively. Entering into alliance with the Organizations, by means of heavy contributions to their funds, or even by paying them the whole bill of the election campaign, the corporations obtained a hold over the representatives. Direct legislative bribery was not on that account unknown; not often met with in Congress, it was far

more common in the State Legislatures; but even in these assemblies a large proportion or most of the members were not to be bought, and if they showed themselves too obliging to the corporations, it was more often because their dependent position with regard to the party Organizations and their powerful backers forced them to be so. A member of the Legislature of New York has pathetically explained this by saying to a journalist: "I want to be honest, and I am honest; but I am the slave of the Organization, and if I kick out I am politically ruined."

The railroads.

Under one aspect or another the party Organizations appeared as the base of operations for all the great private interests in their efforts to bend the power of the State to their own selfish ends. The railroad companies took the lead in the attack delivered by monopoly. The construction of the immense network of railroads, their financial management, and their working were marked by flagrant abuses, committed with the help or the acquiescence of the State for the benefit of small rings of financiers and speculators, who commended themselves by their lavish contributions to the funds of the party Organizations. When it became clear that it was absolutely necessary to have the railroads supervised and regulated by the State, the companies began a desperate struggle to escape from it. For a considerable time they held the State in check by means of the direct corruption of the lobby, as well as through the medium of the party Organization. They concluded alliances with the most corrupt Machines and Rings. They equipped and kept up political Organizations for their own use, and ran them as they pleased,

like their trains; intervened in all the presidential elections; tried to settle to their liking the elections of governors, of judges, of members of Legislatures, and even to fix the committees in the assemblies. Certain States became completely dependent on the railroads, were "owned" by them. In Congress itself the railroads wielded a decisive influence; a good many of their magnates had seats in the Senate.

In the States of the West in which people were particularly exasperated at the abuses of the railroads, they succeeded over and over again in defeating the coalitions of the railroads with the party Organizations and in getting laws passed which curtailed the power of the companies, but these coalitions continued all the same, and frequently had their revenge. Most of the laws enacted, which were often extravagant and unpractical, were repealed, or their application was paralyzed by the connections which the railroads possessed in the Legislatures, the government departments, and even in the law courts. Legitimate attacks provoked by the monopolist power and the corrupt influence of the companies were followed by others which were not; the unpopularity of the companies with the public made them a target for venal legislators, who brought in bills directed against this or that company with the sole object of being paid to withdraw their proposals. The companies fought these blackmailers (called "strikers") with the same devices which they employed to buy the laws of which they stood in need, — lobbying and influence of the party Organizations, to which they made regular contributions, in the nature of insurance premiums, "for protection." Soon they fell into

the habit of subscribing to the funds of the Organization of both parties in the same State or the same city, with the knowledge of both, just as insurances of the same property against fire or other accidents are effected in several companies simultaneously.

The Trusts.

42. Precisely similar relations grew up between the party Organizations and the various monopolized industries which came after that of the railroads in the economic evolution of America, and the most important of which obtained a far-reaching notoriety under the name of "Trusts," with the Standard Oil Company at their head. They all owed their existence and their unchecked growth more or less to the negligence or the improper intervention of the authorities; in any event they had an interest in not being interfered with gratuitously, and they were glad to pay for their "protection." The directors of the Sugar Trust, the most important after the Oil Trust, admitted this before the committee of enquiry of the Senate of the United States, representing it as perfectly natural, and even as right and proper. "We have a good deal of local protection for our contribution." . . . "Do you think it is perfectly proper?" . . . "I think as parties are now managed it is perfectly proper."

The Protectionists.

While certain industrial interests bought "protection" retail from local political organizations, other concerns whose interests and appetites could obtain satisfaction only through Federal legislation allied themselves with one of the two national parties which were contending for power. Foremost among the private interests of the second category came the manufacturing industries, always in quest of "protective" customs

duties. Those duties, greatly enhanced at the time of the Civil War to meet the extraordinary expenses, were to be of a provisional character only. But the manufacturers, anxious to perpetuate them, sought to continue in power the Republican party, under whose auspices the protectionist tariff has been enacted. They supplied the Republican Organization with "fat," with money for its election campaigns, and in return they obtained more and higher protective duties for their products, which enabled them to make enormous fortunes. It was no use for the budget to show a large surplus of receipts every year; the duties were kept up just the same. Confronted with the Democratic President Cleveland, who courageously waged war on extravagant Protection, the manufacturers tried to replace him by a man after their heart, McKinley, author of the tariff bearing his name. Helped by circumstances, they succeeded in getting the latter elected. In return McKinley secured for them from Congress a new tariff, still more prohibitive.

The Silverites.

The campaign of the silverites who contested the Presidency against McKinley was, in its turn, to a great extent a speculation of wealthy industrial interests trying to exploit the power of the State for their own advantage. The increasing production of silver, owing to the discovery of new mines in the Far West, was steadily lowering the price of this metal, so that the ratio between gold and silver, which used to be 16 to 1 and determined the monetary standard, had fallen in the market as low as 31 to 1. The producers of silver wanted to benefit by the difference between the legal ratio and the commercial one, and they demanded free

coinage of the metal, coupled of course with the *imprimatur* of the State, which would give their commodity a forced currency. Striving to seize the power for that purpose, they took as their weapon the Organization of the Democratic party. The Organization allowed itself to be captured by the wealthy owners of the mines, and made over to the champions of the white metal the votes of the bulk of the "regular" adherents of the party. The enterprise failed, but that was not the fault of the Democratic Organization.

Following the example of the large industrial or speculative undertakings which I have just described, all the other private interests with something to hope or fear from the State, which could be affected by legislation, paid tribute to the party Organizations, bought their support and patronage with ready money; and when they were slow about asking for it, the Organization thrust it on them to get the price of it. It was the extension to a larger sphere of the methods of Tammany Hall in all their fulness. The material exploitation of the electoral monopoly acquired by the party Organization reached its climax; from a broker in offices it rose to be a trafficker in political influence; along with elective posts it sold the power residing in them, beginning with the adjudication of contracts, government orders, and public works, and ending with a wholesale and retail trade in legislation and "protection." Thus the operations and the influence of the extra-constitutional organization which grew within the State expanded into all spheres of public life, driving back or encroaching everywhere upon the power of the constituted authorities or of the laws.

43. The traffic in political influence carried on by the politicians and the manipulation of the electoral masses on which it depended became more intricate through the growing number of voters and their differentiation. A strong rule was needed, which should be the more blindly obeyed that it lacked a moral foundation. Such a government appeared, by a natural evolution, after the war, in the person of the autocratic Machine leaders, who wielded power like the "tyrants" of the Greek cities. In America they received the name of "boss," which has become as popular as that of Caucus and Machine. The name dates from the Dutch period in the history of New York, and comes from the Dutch word "baas," which means master, employer, and had long been common in everyday language. After the Civil War it became a political term applied sarcastically to politicians who, in spite of democratic appearances, ruled despotically and wielded a usurped power. "Bossism" marked the last stage in the evolution of the extra-constitutional power brought about by the régime of the American parties. Bossism.

The large cities were the first to develop this species of ruler, thanks to the heterogeneous character of their inhabitants, and to the cæsarean instincts, which always incline the masses to embody their political feelings in a man. Imbued with these propensities, the populations of the big cities lent the politicians their large stock of personal loyalty, which, passing from hand to hand, like a bill of exchange with successive indorsements, was ultimately invested in a supreme chief. This man, who took the lead because he showed the most energy and skill in managing those who knew how City bosses.

to manage the masses, had only to transform the loyalty dammed up in the party channel into votes and public offices to make it the foundation of his power. His sole obligation was to assign their quota of the profits which he made to all the intermediaries who collected the electoral raw material and passed it on to him. The liability was not a very heavy one, if the offices and other sources of gain were abundant. All these conditions happened to be first combined in the home of Tammany, in New York, and it was there that the first bosses made their appearance. Tweed, whose figure is familiar to us, was exactly a "boss" who, while leaving the forms of popular government intact, practically monopolized its powers and ruled the city despotically. It was to him, it appears, that the term "boss" was first applied. His brilliant career was prematurely cut short by his imprisonment, but the position of boss did not long remain vacant in New York. In the other large cities boss rule also asserted itself, without presenting the same continuity and the same fulness of power as in New York and Philadelphia.

State bosses and senatorial bosses.

The boss also made his appearance in the political sphere of the States. He was called into existence there by the same necessities as in the cities: the Organization scattered over the vast area of the State required a head, especially in view of its relations with the Federal Executive, which, acting on the system of spoils, apportioned them among the "workers" in the States. To make these distributions the President stood no less in need of responsible intermediaries. As we are already aware, this duty was assumed by the Senators; they were generally the State bosses. Having, like their proto-

types of the cities, attained their position by a process of natural selection, they wielded, thanks to their influence over the State Machine, a similar power, which in certain States, headed by New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, bordered on pure absolutism. They distributed the nominations, that is to say, decided who should be candidates for the Legislature and for the other high offices of the State; they collected the assessments; the State Legislature, which they had made with their Machine, was at their orders.

Upholding their authority chiefly by the bestowal of Federal offices, the State bosses felt the need of a firm footing at Washington, and to that end the seats in the Senate, which shared with the President his prerogative of appointing to the higher offices, were specially valuable. The State bosses, therefore, emerging from the retired position in which the city bosses often remained, generally got themselves appointed Senators, and in the double capacity of State boss and Senator they could take a high tone with the President and impose their will on him. In the States where the Machine had not developed to any great extent, bossism naturally found the ground less favourable, but the tendency towards this régime was exhibited almost everywhere, appearing in one place with well-marked traits, in another assuming a vaguer or fainter outline, according to the local circumstances and the somewhat changeable conditions of the moment in the local life of parties.

The boss a business man.

44. The rôle of senatorial boss, considerable as it was, remained, however, confined to matters of patronage of the State; it did not extend to government in

general, to national policy. Bossism made a tentative movement in that direction. During Grant's Presidency a sort of syndicate of powerful bosses was formed in the Senate, called the "Senatorial Group," which, with the President's connivance, dictated the policy of the national government. But after Grant's departure the bosses' syndicate disappeared. The bosses fell back upon local affairs in the States and the cities. Almost from the very outset of their career they had been strongly tempted by interests other than those of politics in the European sense of the word. The system of "regular" nominations and assessments, which brought in money, opened out to the boss commercial prospects, which were widened in a marked degree by the expansion of financial undertakings.

The latter, anxious to secure the connivance of the public authorities, bethought themselves, as we have already noted, to direct the corruption, for the sake of greater economy and efficiency, by the party Organizations, which made and unmade the elective bodies. But to come to an understanding with them for this purpose, and to keep up the delicate and continuous relations which the plan required, the capitalists, the corporations, stood in need of intermediaries who could be relied upon for the discretion demanded of a go-between and who possessed unquestioned influence. The political boss, the autocrat of the Machine, who had just broken through the shell of the spoils system, happened to be at hand to discharge this duty, and the capitalists entered into a coalition with him. He got henceforth their subscriptions and supplied the corporations with "protection" on easier terms. The boss centralized political

influence in his own hands, and made himself a broker or wholesale dealer in it. In proportion as he asserted himself in this direction, he drove the "lobby" into the background, just as in commerce and industry the small shopkeepers or manufacturers retired before the large stores and the factory.

Living to a great extent on the corporations, bossism burst into full bloom in the States where big capitalist interests were concentrated, where companies were most numerous, such as New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania. But in almost all other places where the Machine created the boss, he used his political position as a business man; he appeared as a Janus with a double face, as a political dictator and as a broker in legislation and administration, or at all events a dealer in nominations.

No longer real parties.

45. The advent of the commercial boss sealed the moral decomposition of the parties. It indicated the complete elimination of political principles and ideas from their existence. The Democratic party was only a party of resistance opposed to the Republican party. This latter, called into being by a particular national problem, by the struggle against the extension of slavery, had accomplished its task. But it was bent only on keeping itself in power, by substituting for its vanished principles an unreasoning discipline, by trying to rekindle the dying flame of the conflict with the South, by combining with the privileged interests of the manufacturers, and by shirking a straightforward attitude on other questions. But these questions thrust themselves on the parties against their will, and bursting in upon them sowed discord in their ranks. Soon there

was no question at all on which the respective parties were agreed among themselves. The Republicans of the manufacturing East were interested in the protectionist tariff; those of the agricultural West did not care about it; while a good many Democrats in the East and even in the South were drawn by their interests towards Protection. The desire to obtain "cheap money" by means of an unlimited paper currency, which seized on large sections of the population throughout the Union, brought dissension into the Democratic party (the "greenbackers" movement); then, when this desire took shape in the demand for free silver, it made fresh havoc in the Democratic party, while it divided the Republican party, sweeping before it like a tornado the Republican States of the West, inhabited by farmers involved in debt and on the look-out for panaceas which would enable them to repay their creditors, the capitalists of the East, with as little coin as possible. But the parties did not trouble themselves about divisions within their own ranks. As in the days of the slavery conflict, they "agreed to disagree," in order not to shatter the party Organizations.

Parties divided against themselves.

Every Congress, beginning with the Forty-third (of the years 1873–1875), threw into stronger relief the moral decomposition of the parties; very often there was cross voting on each side. Between the parties *qua* parties there was no longer any fixed line of demarcation, and to recognize them it was necessary, as has been remarked, to put labels on their members. Parties and members shifted their position with regard to the questions of the day according to the greater or less chances of capturing the popular suffrage with

this or that attitude. At the end of Cleveland's first administration a realignment of the parties on a real issue appeared probable. Declaring war against Protection, on the eve of the general election, by his famous message of 1887, Cleveland forced the parties to fight on this question. The Democratic party lost the battle, but it seemed to have recovered its moral unity. It did not keep it for long, any more than its rival.

New alignments brought about neither by the tariff;

Indeed, in a short time the situation was once more complicated by the preoccupations arising out of the silver agitation which was invading both parties. On each important occasion the parties in Congress showed themselves divided on the silver problem. In the country the silver agitation continued to make greater and greater havoc and culminated at last in the crisis of 1896. The decisive struggle was approaching, and the leaders of the parties were still shilly-shallying. They were waiting for clearer indications as to which way the cat would jump. At last, when it became evident that the Democrats were going over *en masse* into the silver camp, and that the big commercial interests in the East, on which the Republican party generally leaned, were on the side of gold, the Republican candidate, McKinley, who had supported the silver men in Congress, came out as the uncompromising champion of the gold standard. The Democratic party, overrun by the silverites, was left shorn of its traditional principles, but it none the less kept its old name and style, the saving grace of which decided a very large proportion of its adherents to vote for silver irrespective of their convictions. No real, natural regrouping of parties took place on this question.

nor by the silver question;

nor by imperialism;

Nor was the problem of "imperialism," propounded by the war against Spain, and which deeply divided the public mind, able to bring the parties into line again; for the want of agreement showed itself in each of them.

nor by the economic and social problem.

46. Still earlier a much greater conflict had begun to gather on the horizon, a social conflict. Heralded by repeated flashes during the last quarter of the nineteenth century it lit up the political sky in America with an ominous glow during the election campaign of 1896. It was not only the battle of the gold standard against the white metal; it was also the first great revolt against the money power in society and in the state. The radical elements gathered under the flag of the Democratic party; whereupon the conservative wing forthwith separated itself from that Organization.

Democratic party completely demoralized.

Defeated in 1896 and 1900 the Democratic party turned back at the 1904 election towards conservatism; but the Radicals broke away, and the party suffered an even heavier defeat than before. The Radicals then again got the upper hand, but only to demonstrate once more, at the election of 1908, the continual divisions and defections to which the ill-assorted party was doomed. It possessed but one stable element: the "Solid South." A slave to "race" prejudice, the Solid South remained as before the tool of the Democratic Organization, whether the latter hoisted the conservative or the radical banner. Without being able to give victory, the South only emphasized the artificial character of the conglomeration called the Democratic party.

The Republican party flattered itself on more unity, and, from the fact that it became more and more subservient to private economic interests, to moneyed men,

it seemed to have a claim to be regarded as a conservative party, capable of checking the subversive radicalism which was mounting to the surface of politics. But it was not allowed to retain this character, however little enviable. An anarchist coup, which killed McKinley, brought to the Presidency Roosevelt who did his utmost to clear the Republican party of its plutocratic stain. Having "stolen the thunder" of the radical Democrats he declared war on the Trusts and other economic monopolies. Acclaimed by the country and passing above party lines he established radicalism in governmental action and in legislation, made it respectable in the eyes of timorous or indifferent opinion, and yoked to his car in spite of itself the Republican Organization, nourished though it was by the plutocrats. The last vestige of difference between the parties seemed to fade away. As Jefferson said a century before: "We are all Republicans; we are all Federalists," one could say now: "We are all Radicals." And as in Jefferson's day an era of good feelings seemed to be dawning. Both the radicalism, which seemed to sweep the country, and the good feelings, so far as they touched social conflicts, were rather superficial. But, thanks to the growing prosperity of the country, there grew up in everyday political life an easy-going atmosphere long unknown. Party struggles lost all bitterness; party passion, which had been in constant ebullition since the Civil War, cooled down. In fact, there was only one party left standing — the Roosevelt party, the Republican party, if one could regard the two as synonymous. The Democratic opposition in Congress was reduced to a nullity. The traditional system of

Party lines obliterated by Roosevelt.

two parties, which was steadily decaying, did not work any more. President Roosevelt, whose election in 1904 was supported by a great number of Democratic votes, sought and obtained for "his policies" the assistance of Democrats as well as Republicans and hurled himself against reactionary opposition of either denomination. The elections of 1908 brought the final proof, if such were needed, of the definitive decomposition of parties. Their programmes were alike; their attitude during the electoral campaign differed very little; the choice was no longer between two policies but between two persons, two rival candidates. Their supporters were so mixed up as to produce in the electoral body such queer classifications as "Taft Democrats."

Old party Organizations preserved all the same.

The two great parties no longer respond to any reality in politics. Survivals of an earlier age, they were clearly destined to make way for a new grouping which would inevitably arise, as was said on all sides, on the basis of economic and social divergencies. This reclassing is awaited, and is announced; but it is slow to emerge and probably it will be delayed still farther. It stumbles against the old obstacle, the Organizations controlled by the politicians. The life has gone out of the parties; what matter, the Organizations must be kept intact. Roosevelt himself, who, without thinking of it, has done much to hasten the decomposition of parties in recent years, has done his utmost to uphold the Republican Organization. The "giant-killer" of economic privileges, he has refrained from attacking the one which is justly considered the source of all other privileges, the Protectionist Tariff: he was afraid to "split the party," which was allied to the manufactur-

ers. Thus for thirty years there has lasted under slightly varying aspects a situation always fundamentally the same: parties scattered, morally decomposed, and unable to hold together by any natural affinities, while the old Organizations still subsist, reduced to the state of electoral machines for manipulating the elections, dividing the electors into two rival camps and setting them at one another like marionettes. Incapable of giving vital strength, which they lack themselves, to representative government, the Organizations continue to undermine it, setting always in its face the extra-constitutional government which we know. Its pernicious effects are less flagrant than they were, thanks to the serious checks put to the spoils system and to the other abuses of the régime, — as will be outlined later, — but still they exist. To form an exact estimate of them, both in the present and in the past, one must make a detailed study of the mechanism of the Organizations and their working.

SIXTH CHAPTER

THE LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The primaries.

47. THE body of the party Organizations contains the following three essential organs: the primary assembly of the members of the party from which all the powers of the Organization emanate; the committee of the party, which is the controlling power within it; and the conventions of the delegates who choose the candidates for elective offices on behalf of the party.

The primary assemblies bear the name of "caucuses" in New England and in certain States of the West, and that of "primaries" or "primary elections" in the rest of the Union. They meet in each city ward or rural district, at tolerably frequent intervals, to make direct choice of the candidates of the party for the local offices, but especially to appoint delegates to the various party conventions, which select candidates for public functions on all the other steps of the hierarchical ladder. In a few large cities the nucleus of the organization is formed by the followers of the party grouped into associations, or permanent clubs. The discretionary right of admission or exclusion possessed by these associations, or clubs, has too often made them close bodies, and has enabled a small fraction of the party to assume the power of speaking and of taking decisions on its behalf, in New York especially. In the

very great majority of cases, the organization of the party is started in the primaries, to which are admitted the electors who declare that they have voted for the candidate of the party at the last election, or who, in general, profess the creed of the party. They are bound to make good these declarations in case they are challenged. The meeting, or more often the committee, has to decide the point in dispute.

But whether the admission to the primaries is beset with more or less extensive restrictions, in practice the great majority of the voters keep away from these assemblies. The proportion of voters who take part in the primaries varies from one to ten per cent. The rest are too much engrossed in their business or their domestic affairs or their pleasures. This is especially true of the cities; in the country districts the meeting of the primary is a small pastime, which attracts people for want of anything better. A good many non-participants are greatly encouraged in their attitude, if not justified, by the fact that the primary is almost invariably in the hands of a coterie of politicians. The citizens outside the clique are reduced to impotence, while the politicians who manipulate the primary form a compact group. The conditions of existence in the large cities, which have done away with neighbourliness, make the respectable citizens strangers to one another. The lists of the candidates voted on are settled beforehand, behind the scenes, by a few politicians, who form a "Ring," and "make up the slate," as is said in their slang. Probably on one occasion a schoolboy's slate had been used for noting the names of the candidates to be proposed, and the word has acquired a generic sig-

nificance, a verb even being formed out of it, "to slate," to be "slated," which means to be chosen as a candidate by the politicians. True, every citizen is entitled to propose candidates of his own, but he will get no support in the meeting; moreover, the delegates to be chosen are often so numerous that a previous understanding is absolutely necessary.

The committees.

48. The stronghold of the ruling "Ring" is the local committee of the party. Each political subdivision, the rural town or the city ward, or even the precinct or the school district, has its committee, appointed annually at the primary of the party. Above this committee there are the ward committee in the cities, which is generally composed of the members of the precinct committees, and the county committee, which is the central committee for all the cities and towns within the county, or the city committee in the large cities which have an independent central organization. The members of the county committee and of the city committee are chosen by the committees of the wards and of the towns or by the respective delegates of these territorial units to the county convention. In some States (in Missouri, for example) the county committees are composed entirely *ex officio* of chairmen of the township or ward committees. Thus on the whole the permanent part of the Organization — the committees — is cast in a centralizing mold.

The local committee, which is supposed to be the executive organ, in reality manipulates the whole Organization. Generally it is the committee which makes up the slate, which convenes the primary, which selects the date and place of the meeting to suit its

own convenience, which settles its procedure, which presides over the assembly until the officers are elected. Very often it is the committee, again, which appoints the "inspectors of election," who have to receive and count the votes, and who may "count out" or "count in" a particular candidate. Being entrusted with the duty of keeping the roll of membership, the committee decides beforehand who is entitled to take part in the primaries. In a word, all the business of the primaries is "cut and dried" by the committee. Once in power the coterie easily keeps there; possessing a sort of mortgage over each future primary, the committee gets itself reappointed from year to year.

The influence of the county committee is still more excessive. It rules over the local Organizations with powers which are sometimes despotic. It decides, without appeal, on all the contests which arise in the Organization. It wields disciplinary powers in it: it can suspend, or even turn out, the officers of the associations or of the local committees. Nay more, it can dissolve a whole local Organization, when it encounters opposition in it, or refuse to recognize it as the "regular" Organization.

Stratagems at primaries.

49. To have their own way in the primaries, the politicians have devised an elaborate system of tactics. In the first place, everything is done to keep away the citizens who do not belong to the dominant clique. The meeting is fixed for a date when it would be impossible for them to come, — for instance, during the very hot months when most of the well-to-do citizens go away for a holiday. The hour and the place of meeting are generally selected with the same object. It

is held in an out-of-the-way place or in an unpleasant, if not dangerous, neighbourhood, where a respectable man would not care to set foot. Very often, perhaps most often, the primary is held in a public-house, or a few doors off one, or in a livery stable, or in a grocer's back shop. To make good one's right to take part in the primary, it is even necessary, sometimes, to use one's fists. To keep away opposition the politicians have recourse to frauds too, which, from long practice, have been reduced to a system, not to say a science. The proper notice convening the primaries is published too late or is not published at all, so that the initiated alone are informed in time. To secure the same end, the primaries are appointed quite unexpectedly, before the usual date. This is a "snap" primary. The meeting is not forestalled; it is advertised early enough, but the Ring has taken care to fill the hall with people devoted to them or in their pay, picked up in the public-houses or at the street crossings, who will swamp all opposition by their numbers. This is a "packed" primary. In the large cities there are strolling companies of voters, who travel to order from one ward to another. Often the boss of the opposite party politely lends his men for the evening.

If, after all, the opposition is still too numerous, it is reduced by the arbitrary rule of the presiding officer assisted by the coterie of the Ring. Debate is stifled, the nominations are rushed, and the slate is carried by a series of movements regulated with the precision of a military parade. There may be a vote by ballot, but then all sorts of frauds are resorted to in voting and in counting the votes. The lists of the members of the

party are full of names of persons who are not electors in the locality, who are dead, or who have never existed. A good number of names on these "padded rolls" are distributed to imported hirelings who vote, and even several times over under different names ("repeaters"). The election inspectors imperturbably accept all the voting-papers, down to the "pudding ballots" containing several votes on very thin paper, wrapped up together, and then, when the counting begins, they unroll them, and enter them, one by one; often they put a certain number of voting papers, with the names of their favourite candidates, into the ballot-box beforehand ("ballot-box stuffing"), or, while the votes are being counted, they dexterously conjure away papers bearing the names of their opponents, or drop papers containing the names of friends out of their sleeve, or even make an untrue return of the figures obtained by the different candidates.

Used with impunity.

True, an appeal lies to the county or city committee, but that committee hardly ever decides against the manipulators of the primaries, for it is composed of their political friends and allies, of their "own cousins," as a boss put it. It is not uncommon for the dissatisfied parties to take the law into their own hands during the primary, by engaging in a regular fight, which sometimes ends in bloodshed. The intervention of the police who endeavour, with more or less impartiality, to preserve order and stop brawls, is pretty frequent. On the other hand, a good many primaries pass off quite calmly, to wit, when there is no opposition to the dominant Ring in the district.

Opposition, if it does occur, rarely proceeds from the

Affair of "ins" and "outs."

good citizens. Generally, the attack is led by a rival faction of the politicians, which covets the places to which the primaries are a stepping-stone. Of the two factions the one which wins the victory in the primary, by getting its lists of delegates to the conventions voted, will have every prospect of being recognized as the "regular" one entitled to the rewards. A contested primary is therefore an affair between the office-holders and office-seekers, the "ins" and the "outs," which does not concern, so to speak, the great mass of the citizens. The latter are dragged into the contest in a passive way, by the members of both rings of politicians, who move heaven and earth to get as many people as possible to vote in their favour. They make use of every kind of argument: they appeal to friendship, promise favours and places, or even resort to direct corruption in its different forms, — from the distribution of drinks and cigars down to the payment of money.

Roosevelt's description of a primary.

50. President Roosevelt having been sent in 1891, when a Civil Service Commissioner, to Baltimore to make an enquiry into the breaches of the law of 1883 relating to political assessments, has drawn from life an interesting picture of the primaries which he attended there in person: —

> The primaries, he wrote in his official report, were marked by a very bitter contest between two factions of the Republican party. . . In its essence it was, without doubt, mainly a fight between the office-holders on one side and the disappointed office-seekers on the other. . . . As far as I could find out from the witnesses, there seemed to be no question of principle at stake at all, but one of offices merely. . . . Seemingly, many of them

regarded victory in the primaries as of more importance than victory at the polls, because the former gave the control of the party machinery, and would therefore, in their own language, entitle them to "recognition" in the distribution of patronage.

As a whole the contest was marked by great fraud and no little violence. Many of the witnesses of each faction testified that the leaders of the opposite faction in their ward had voted repeaters, Democrats, and men living outside of the ward in great numbers, and I am inclined to believe that in this respect there is much reason to regard the testimony of each side as correct in its outline of the conduct of the other. Accusations of ballot-box stuffing were freely made, with much appearance of justification. A number of fights took place. In many wards there were several arrests; in one or two cases so many men were arrested that the police patrol wagons could not accommodate them. In several cases the judges of the election were themselves among those arrested. Much complaint was made in certain wards of one side or the other being "in" with the police, who would accordingly arrest and drag out of the line voters of the opposition faction, and would decline to do so in the case of voters of the protected faction. In many of the wards furniture wagons were hired to bring voters up to the polls. The ward workers stood about shouting, challenging, occasionally fighting, seeing that the ticket holders peddled their tickets actively, keeping the furniture wagons sharply on the move, taking doubting or wavering voters into the saloons and treating them to beer.

In some wards the use of the so-called "pudding" tickets seems to have been quite common. . . . There was considerable complaint of bribery; in some cases votes were said to have been bought for money; in others, the charge was that outsiders, not Republicans, possibly not residents of the ward, had been offered drinks to participate in the primary. Most of the witnesses spoke of the cheating in a matter-of-course way, as being too universal and too common in primaries generally to be worthy of notice, and a great number of them did not seem to bear any special malice against their opponents for having cheated successfully, — if anything, rather admiring them for their shrewdness, — and frankly testified that it was only lack of opportunity that had

hindered them from doing as much themselves. Two of the witnesses, employés of the custom house, testified with refreshing and cheerful frankness to this effect. One of them remarked, anent fixing up "pudding" tickets: "I would have done the same thing myself; I believe in doing anything to win." The testimony of the other ran as follows: "I don't say I wouldn't cheat in the primaries. Whoever gets two judges, wins." *Q.* "Each side cheats as much as it can?" — *A.* "Certainly, that's the way; I do it just the same as they do. They had two judges." *Q.* "How do you do your cheating?" — *A.* "Well, we do our cheating honourably. If they catch us at it, it's all right; it's fair."

The ways of the opposition.

51. However great the scandals which enable one of the two factions to carry the primary, it is generally left in undisputed possession, and the opposition has but one resource: to split, to "bolt." It separates from the "regular" faction, threatening to fight it at the polls. Sometimes it goes farther, and convenes a primary composed of its own adherents, and selects a rival set of delegates, claiming for itself and for them the party orthodoxy and denouncing the rival faction as a usurper. But all these manifestations are almost always devoid of effect, and often even of sincerity. The delegates chosen in the dissentient primary may come to the convention, but they will not be allowed to sit; the "regular" delegates will always be admitted, even if they have been elected by a minority of the party. The dissentients will be obliged to submit, they will not go so far as a real "bolt," for that is equivalent to burning one's ships, to cutting oneself off wantonly from communion with the party and its earthly rewards. The uncompromising attitude of the dissentients is often only a manœuvre: "they talk big things" with a

view to "recognition," to induce the victorious faction to promise them a share of the booty.

It does happen that the primaries are conducted fairly, without frauds or stratagems; but this is rather the exception. In certain cities there have not been honest primaries within living memory. In the East, the cities of New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore hold the record for fraudulent primaries. The West is not much better off than the East; even the rudimentary States of the Pacific slope are afflicted with the same complaint.

Primaries in rural districts.

In the rural districts the state of things is far better. The primaries are fairer and more numerously attended. It is more difficult, if not impossible, to commit most of the frauds which characterize these meetings in the cities, such as voting repeaters or by persons who are strangers to the locality and to the party: the people know each other well. Nevertheless, the rival factions do not scruple to resort to tricks of a bucolic ingenuity to monopolize the primaries. In order to hold the primary without opposition, the chairman, having put his watch on, hurriedly opens the sitting and despatches the list of business with lightning speed, and then, when the other people arrive at the real time, the primary is over; they protest, the chairman pulls out his watch, the protesters do the same, the watches are compared, but the vote cannot be upset. However, even in the rural districts, less innocent frauds are resorted to; sometimes the practices indulged in by the manipulators of the primaries in the cities are followed more closely. I have been told of country primaries where the expense ran as high as $12,000;

voters have been brought down in special trains and money and liquor freely offered.

The choices of the primaries.

The selections of delegates made in the primaries are not always so bad as might be expected from the practices which are in vogue in them. Among the elected are to be found respectable persons who hold aloof from the primaries, and are not aware of the means by which they have been returned. The politicians place them at the top of their lists to get the other less acceptable candidates through more easily. They serve as a flag to cover the merchandise of the politicians. Occasionally the latter abstain from selecting men of their own making in order not to raise respectable opinion, if it is very strong in the district, against them on the day of election; the better element in the electorate thus acts as a check on the politicians of the primaries, but — and this point cannot be too strongly insisted on — in an altogether relative degree, and more often hardly at all.

Power of the primaries.

52. The power which the primaries wield runs through the whole line. They determine the character and the acts of all the conventions which succeed one another, for all emanate from the primary as from a source. They determine the nominations to all public offices, from the most humble ones up to that of President of the Republic. And these nominations again decide the election, by the intrinsic force of party loyalty: confronted with the alternative of going over to the enemy or of voting for the candidate recommended by the Organization of his party, the voter submits to the ticket which it has settled. In places where the party is in a majority, nomination

indeed is equivalent to election. Consequently all those who aspire to public offices, or who deal in them, or who want to exploit the influence which they carry with them in executive or legislative spheres, have their eyes turned towards the primaries: the politicians start by ensconcing and fortifying themselves in the primary; it is their base of operations and their citadel. The power of the boss over the Machine consists, above all, in the power of managing the primaries; if he is master of them he holds the conventions in the hollow of his hand, and if he can make his will prevail in the conventions he will drag the majority of the party after him. The candidate who wants to be adopted by a convention, however high it may be, must, to succeed, first make sure of the delegates chosen in the primaries; it is therefore the primaries that he "works" by intrigue and corruption, if the Machine does not do it for him. It is also in the primaries and by the same means that not unfrequently operations are begun by the business men and the jobbers who are on the look-out for contracts and public works; the work of the "lobby" is carried on, or begun, in the primaries. In short, the entire representative régime on which the political life of America rests, both in the parties and in the State, is shaped by the primaries, and yet those primaries, as we have just realized, are mostly but a fraud and a farce.

Search for remedies.

This state of things did not fail to attract public attention at an early stage. The good citizens who abandoned the primaries to the politicians were adjured to attend these meetings regularly; but the appeal proved ineffective, and by dint of continual solemn

repetition the injunction "attend the primaries" became a joke. Various more or less ingenious schemes were mooted for reforming the primaries. At last the legislature was called in to defeat the craft and guile of the politicians. A whole series of legislative measures has been enacted in several States of the Union. They will be examined in detail in a subsequent chapter. In the meantime a very brief sketch may suffice. The legislature was at first loath to intervene in the life of the political parties by imperative behests, but contented itself at the beginning with recommending them, in some States, to submit to a regulation of the conduct of the primaries, more or less similar to that which obtains for the elections. It hardly made up its mind, in a few States, to penalize the acts of fraud and bribery committed at the primaries. For the rest the parties remained free to do as they pleased. The result of the optional regulation was *nil*, while the abuses at the primaries continually increased and cried for remedy. A great agitation was then raised throughout the country to bring about a complete legalization of the primaries. This agitation led to the enactment in most of the States of laws subjecting the primaries to a legal regulation no longer optional but mandatory. The law defines the manner in which the primaries are to be convened, the procedure to be followed there, the way of vote taking, the constitution of the committees, etc. The primaries have thus been transformed into a wheel of the mechanism of the State. The effect on the manners of the primaries was beneficial; very frequently, if not in all cases, their habitual abuses became less glaring. But they are far from being

extinguished, the politicians have not been ousted at all, but rather the reverse, as we shall see later on.

The fruit of the primaries — the conventions emanating from them and their choice of candidates to offices — remaining almost as bitter as before, people hit on the idea of doing away with the conventions altogether by law. In many States a new set of laws was enacted which substituted for the representative system in the party Organizations a direct system. These laws established direct primaries in which the adherents of a party, duly qualified, nominate, in legal form, the candidates of their party for most of the elective offices in the county and even in the State. In some places, and especially in the South, direct nominations, without the medium of conventions, have been already adopted spontaneously by the parties themselves, without however applying to territorial areas larger than the county (except in one State). But the legalized and State-wide mode of direct nominations of party candidates is quite recent and is still in the experimental stage. The results which this method seems to bring about or which it promises to secure will be farther examined. Anyway, the old extra-legal system obtains still in more than a half of the States, and in those very States in which the law has instituted direct primaries the nomination for some elective offices, such as Presidential electors or delegates to national conventions, are still made by conventions of delegates. We have therefore to proceed to consider them in their turn.

SEVENTH CHAPTER

THE CONVENTIONS

Convention system.

53. THE convention system is extremely complicated and, at first sight, even somewhat confused. The first complication comes from the federative system of the American Government, with its double set of parallel functions in the State and in the Union. A State sends to Congress ten or twenty representatives, and a hundred or a couple of hundred members to the legislative assembly of the State, and consequently it is divided, with a view to the Federal elections, into ten or twenty districts, and into one hundred or two hundred for the legislative elections of the State. The delegates of the party in one of these last districts cannot, therefore, choose the candidate for a congressional district, or *vice versa*, without infringing the representative principle. Hence the necessity of holding two conventions of delegates: the one composed of delegates from all the primaries of the congressional district which will select the candidate for Congress; and the other containing delegates from the primaries of the much smaller district which has to return a member to the local legislative assembly.

The same applies to the other offices which are filled up by election: the judiciary and the principal executive offices, not to mention those connected with

local self-government, the municipal offices and others. Consequently, each public office to which a particular territorial subdivision is assigned requires a special convention of delegates to settle the candidature on behalf of the respective party. If many offices in the same electoral unit have to be filled up, for instance those of the State, — Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, State Secretary, State Treasurer, Attorney-General, judges of the Supreme Court, etc., — the selection of the candidates is made in a single convention, called the "State convention." It is the same with county or city offices, which, very often but not always, are dealt with in a single "county convention" or "city convention." The principal conventions, apart from those of the State and of the county or of the city, not to mention the national, are as follows: the legislative assembly district conventions, for selecting the candidate for the State legislative assembly; the senatorial district, for choosing the candidate for the Senate of the State; the congressional district, for selecting the candidate for the House of Representatives at Washington; and the judicial conventions.

Among the conventions, some proceed from the primaries by direct election, other by elections at two or even three degrees, to wit, the State conventions, whose members are generally elected by the conventions of legislative districts;[1] and the national conventions, which issue, in part at least, as we shall see, from the State conventions. As the national conven-

[1] In these States, however, where direct primaries have been established, the delegates to the State conventions are chosen at the primaries by the party members themselves.

tions will be dealt with in a special chapter, the description given in the following pages will refer solely to the lower conventions.

The number of the delegates to the several conventions is not a fixed one; it is determined by the respective county, city, or State committee, according to the number of votes polled in each locality by the candidates of the party at the last presidential election, and still more often at that for the State Governor. Sometimes the number of delegates in State conventions is twice the representation in both houses of the Legislature or it is rated according to some other fixed standard. The totals of membership of the conventions vary indefinitely with the conventions and the States; some are composed of a few dozen members, while others have several hundred or more than a thousand, and occasionally even as many as two thousand members. Each delegate is given a deputy ("alternate"), to take his place if he is prevented from attending.

Character of the delegates.

54. The composition of the conventions from the standpoint of the moral, intellectual, and social character of their members, is a somewhat motley one, for although they are managed by professional politicians, they are not recruited exclusively from their ranks. No doubt, a considerable proportion of each convention consists of office-seekers or office-holders, and, in general, of mercenary politicians. The convention is for them a sort of stock exchange, where they sell and buy political influence, payable in places or money, or, at all events, get to know each other, and form connections which they will turn to account later on. In

the same category of delegates are often found persons who are simply agents for big private concerns, for railroad companies, and other corporations which want to introduce their garrisons into the political fortresses. Other delegates, without being professionals, derive gratifications of *amour-propre* from the ephemeral position of delegate, were it only, perhaps, the extremely modest one of seeing their names appear in the local paper. Along with these small folk full of petty vanity, are found persons of higher rank in the social scale, well-to-do, and perfectly respectable, who are not above the homage paid to notoriety, and who accept and court it all the more readily that they think they are performing a duty in so doing. Finally, there is a category of obscure, humble delegates, free from the cant of these respectable personages, and sincerely desirous of discharging their task for the public good.

The distribution of these different categories among the conventions is a very unequal one. In a general way it may be said that the least reputable conventions are the city conventions, which often exhibit a collection of political bandits, of rogues. In the country districts where there are no large cities, the county conventions keep up to a very fair moral and social standard. The best are the State conventions, in which are often to be found many very respectable citizens. On the whole the *personnel* of the conventions cannot pretend to reflect public opinion. The enlightened section of the community is outside the regular parties, or is only connected with them in a nominal way. The representative pretensions of the conventions with regard to the opinion of the parties

are more justified, but can only be admitted with qualification, for even among the trusty adherents of the parties a certain number never come in contact with the Organizations.

Procedure in conventions.

55. The defect of the inadequately representative character of the conventions is again aggravated by the procedure and by the habits which obtain in these assemblies. The convention is opened and conducted till its permanent organization is chosen by a person specially appointed for that purpose by the committee of the party. The powers of this "temporary chairman" are immense; it is he who really decides or prejudges the cases of contested credentials, for he selects the committee on credentials, which can with impunity unseat delegates duly elected. The adherents of the Machine who have been defeated in the primary start a sham contest, claiming to have been duly elected; or they go so far as to "bolt," to hold a new primary and choose their delegates. The temporary chairman, if friendly to them, allows them all to take their seats, leaving their rivals, the real delegates, to bring their case before the committee on credentials; this committee, after a sham investigation, decides against them. The convention in which the pretended delegates, admitted provisionally on *prima facie* evidence, have a majority, forthwith ratifies the proposals of the committee, and the Machine and its candidates remain masters of the position. It is therefore an axiom that "the temporary chairman is the convention." After the report on the contested seats and other reports, if need be, have been adopted, the convention proceeds to its proper work, which is the choice of the candidates for election. As

soon as the voting is over and the "ticket" is settled, the convention adjourns *sine die.*

In the higher conventions, especially in the State conventions, the programme is far more elaborate and more decorative. The sitting is opened with prayers read by a clergyman. The temporary chairman appoints, on motions brought in by different members, in addition to the committee on credentials, a committee on permanent organization, which will propose the permanent officers, and a committee on resolutions, which will draw up the programme of the party with declarations on the questions of the day. The resolutions are generally adopted without amendment or discussion. Often some further proposals and motions are submitted or speeches are delivered, but these are all in the nature of interludes. It rarely happens that such manifestations of opinion are of real consequence. As soon as the preliminary proceedings are brought to an end, the permanent officers are appointed. The president is generally an influential personage in the party; he is followed by a long array of honorary vice-presidents and honorary secretaries, whose titles are a means of recognizing faithful party service. In taking the chair, the president produces a long speech, prepared beforehand, which, in more or less high-flown language, glorifies the party, recalls its achievements in the past, its "immortal principles," and vigorously attacks and anathematizes the rival party. The candidates are proposed by delegates of note in eulogistic, and more or less lengthy, speeches, which however will have very little to do with the success of the aspirants to the nominations. The choice of the latter as a matter of fact has

more often than not been already settled in the primaries, where the decisive battle is fought by the rival candidates, with the result that the man who has "got the delegates" will carry the vote of the convention. After the proclamation of the result, the friends of the defeated candidate move to make the nomination of the winner unanimous — a proposal which is carried amid deafening applause.

Manners of the conventions.

56. In places where the Machine is absolute master of the situation the whole thing goes like clockwork, every point has been "cut and dried," and the convention presents the spectacle, which rejoices the heart of the party managers, of a "harmonious" convention. If the convention is not "harmonious," the proceedings are made as lively as in the primaries by the rival factions, even to the "fights" which call for the intervention of the police. The convention often happens to be split up into several groups, each of them perhaps having its favourite candidate, and none of them strong enough to compel the others to follow it. Then to get the delegates, diplomacy has to be resorted to under different aspects down to direct bribery. And after all that an understanding is often extremely difficult to arrive at, each rival group sticking to its candidates. Thereupon one ballot succeeds another without result; no candidate has a majority. It is a deadlock. Sometimes this lasts for days, and the number of ballots which have been taken reaches unheard-of figures, especially in the small conventions, where at first sight it would appear easier to come to terms.

The work of "getting the delegates" inaugurated at the primaries is resumed several weeks before the con-

vention; the delegates are pestered on all sides, they are approached with flattery, with civility, with promises of places, or of money, or of favours of various kinds; every argument is brought to bear. The last, and often the main assault, is delivered at the convention itself. The managers of the different candidates open their "head-quarters" in the hotels of the city in which the convention is being held, whence they direct the attack, and where they entertain the delegates and persons capable of influencing them. On the eve of the convention a party is given them. The delegates are not insensible to these marks of attention; but the wary ones require something more positive. The favourite plan consists of "deals," bargains between the representatives of the various groups of delegates, who divide the candidatures between them and the offices which will be the spoils of the victors. A more or less considerable number of delegates remain outside these bargains, — they are the respectable delegates of various grades and categories; generally their honesty of itself delivers them into the hands of the politicians. When confronted with professionals skilled in all the arts of their trade they fall an easy prey to them. This is especially the case with the rural delegates.

Character of the candidates.

57. What is the character of the candidates turned out by the conventions which we have just seen at work? It differs a great deal, according to the several kinds of conventions. The lower-grade conventions, that is to say, those which provide for the less important elective offices, as a rule produce candidates who are decidedly bad, from the standpoint of morality and intelligence. The nominations go to the "workers" of the Organiza-

tion, and, in general, to the politicians of low degree, in return for their services, or in recognition of the position which they have won in the caucuses and the committees. This applies, in the first place, to the candidates for the local offices in the cities, and pretty often in the counties. The legislative candidatures are, considering their importance for the political life of the country, the least satisfactory. The candidates for the House of Representatives at Washington are, for the most part, far from being superior men. As for those who get the nominations for the State legislatures, they leave still more to be desired. Not unfrequently their morality is anything but high, though in some States a change for the better has been noticeable in these last years. The conventions of rural legislative districts, being made up of a better class of men, are more strict in their choice, but in the large cities the selections are deplorable in the great majority of cases, although, again, the best representatives also come from the cities.

It is otherwise with the candidates for conspicuous offices, the holders of which are always under the public eye, such as the mayor, the State governor, the treasurer, and other high State officials, the judges of the superior courts. The conventions, in particular the State conventions, take care to select for those offices decent candidates, so as not to run counter to public opinion and expose the Organization of the party to a revolt, and perhaps to a defeat. Sometimes even the nominations hit upon persons out of the common run.

But most of the decent candidates are afflicted with an inherent defect, *i.e.* their weakness of character, their lack of energy and will. In this respect they are a

reflection of the category of decent delegates whom the politicians take into the conventions, to impart to those latter a tone of respectability. Their weakness of character easily makes them the tools of the astute politicians, who may became "a power behind the throne greater than the throne," and this is what often induces a party Machine or a boss to select them.

No inducements for superior men.

58. Even in places where the party Organization is not strong enough, nor corrupt or ambitious enough, to dictate to the officials who owe their nomination to it, superior men have little prospect or desire of being adopted by the conventions. We have not to look for an explanation; it is there in the three words "getting the delegates," which are inscribed on the door of American political life like the three well-known words over the entrance to Dante's Inferno. Besides, most of the public offices hold out a very poor bait to ambition or the love of gain. In a State there are not ten really important posts. The emoluments are wretched, compared with those in private concerns. The position is a most precarious one, for the elective terms are short, not exceeding two years on the average, and rarely extending to four (except for certain judgeships, the term of which is fourteen or even twenty-one years). The chances of re-election are almost *nil*. On the other hand, the liberal professions and industrial and commercial pursuits offer, amid the steady growth of the country, an endless field of activity, in which the most gifted minds and the strongest energies can find worthy scope and win triumphs which flatter self-love, excite the imagination, and satisfy the craving for wealth. Political offices, that is to say, those which are

considered as such in Europe, seats in legislative assemblies and ministerial posts, have little attraction for Americans, far less than in the Old World. The American political arena is too small, split up as it is by the federative organization of the Union into a great number of little compartments; the contests which are fought in it, even on the large Federal stage, almost entirely turning on business questions, have no dramatic interest capable of attracting doughty combatants and a numerous public whose shouts and applause stimulate and reward them. Nor does the position of legislator confer a patent of social nobility, as it used to do in the dawn of American political life, and as it still does in the present day in England, to a certain extent; there is no such thing as a social nobility in the United States, as a whole; in the older parts of the country, as the East and South, there may be still found such a social stratum. At all events the members of the legislative assemblies would be the last persons to come in for it: the discredit into which they have fallen is too great.

Eligibles restricted by local residence.

Restricted by so many more or less organic conditions, the circle of those eligible by the conventions is still further narrowed, owing to two prejudices which have obtained the force of political customs or laws. One has made a dogma of the principle of local representation in its strictest sense, according to which elective offices can be filled only by persons residing in the political subdivision in question, so that to stand, for instance, for Congress, it is not enough to be an American citizen, or even a citizen of the State, but you must also be domiciled in the congressional district which

has to elect its representative. A man of the highest eminence, with a national and, perhaps, universal reputation, if he is not a prophet in his own little country, cannot enter political life, nor re-enter it if he has lost the favour of his constituents or of the ruling clique. For instance, Gladstone, who, in the course of his stirring career, had to change his constituency several times, would have been excluded from the American Congress from the outset. This restriction of the eligibles to the local residents is accompanied by another which aggravates it in a marked degree. Custom has fixed a maximum of occupation for each office: one term, two or three, and once this limit is reached, the holder, whatever his merit and the services which he might have been able to render in the future, owing to the experience acquired, must retire; "he has had enough," "he should step aside to give somebody else a chance." In the South, this practice does not prevail. In New England, also, people like to keep good old servants, but there, too, unreasoning rotation triumphs owing to the prejudice of local representation. A legislative district is composed of several localities, of six or seven towns, which elect a member together. Accordingly, to "pass the honours around," on each occasion a representative of another town is elected in turn.

and rotation.

59. Thus everything conspires to ensure the adoption at the conventions of candidates stamped with the common hallmark of mediocrity. But far from being a blemish, this quality generally becomes the first condition of their success at elections. We are already familiar, from the history of the presidential candidatures, with the "available candidate," and his qualifica-

The available candidate.

tions. The same qualifications apply just as much to offices below that of the President; in each case the most suitable candidate will be the one who has not made himself conspicuous in a good or a bad sense, who has had no opportunity of making enemies. Intellectual ability will always be useful to him; it is just as well that he should be a good speaker, but it is not indispensable. Nor is the prestige of wealth an important factor in the United States for winning popular suffrages. The local influence wielded by the candidate is no doubt an advantage to him, but amid the general fluctuation to which existence in the New World is liable, a man is up one day and down the next.

Compared with England, the individuality of the candidate in the democracy of America is very faint indeed. In England the elector votes for a candidate, in America for a ticket on which all the numerous candidates are jumbled together. The English candidate has to face the crowd alone, all eyes are upon him, he has more need than his American congener to be a good speaker, to impress the intelligence or the imagination by his personal ability. The American candidate is only an ingredient of the more or less scientific compound represented by the ticket. Its particular and distinctive nature, except for the higher offices such as State governor or mayor, is of value only to the extent in which it can accelerate cohesion. Appealing to an electoral body composed of various groups, the ticket will be all the more successful with it because its composition presents a reflection of these groups. The individuals who make up the slate take care therefore to put on it, according to the composition of the electoral population, an Irish-

man, a German, a Scandinavian, a Czech, or, in other orders of ideas, a farmer, a cyclist of note.

Legal regulation of conventions.

60. The legal regulation of the primaries has been extended in some degree to the conventions. The law has made a few, rather timid, attempts to regulate the procedure of the conventions, without, however, deeply affecting the life of those assemblies. Quite otherwise has been the effect on the conventions of the direct primaries instituted in many States. In the State of Wisconsin, which has taken the lead in the agitation for bringing about that reform, the conventions have been entirely abolished; in Oklahoma the law allows them only for formulating the platforms of the parties. In some States, in which direct primaries have been introduced, all conventions except State conventions or congressional conventions, have ceased to exist, simply in consequence of the fact that the nominations they used to make are henceforward a legal attribution of the primaries. In those States only the presidential electors and the delegates to the National Convention, or even these latter alone, are chosen in conventions. Lastly, in other States, in which the law providing for nominations by the primaries applies only to certain localities or to certain offices, or is only optional, many other categories of conventions subsist, besides the State conventions or the congressional conventions. The convention system has been seriously hurt in some fifteen States, and in a still greater number of States the selection of the committees has been taken away from the will of the conventions and handed over to the primaries or left to the conventions, but subject to rules established by law. The latter determines now the

structure of the committees, from the precinct up to the central State committees, now the mode of their election, and sometimes their authority is specified.

The regulation of the conventions by the law of the States had to stop, naturally, at the threshold of the National Convention. Still it has attempted to penetrate even there, having provided, in Wisconsin and in Oklahoma, for the election of delegates to national conventions in direct primaries, and, as we shall see, in a third State in the West the law has given to the primaries the choice of the members of the national committee for the State.

EIGHTH CHAPTER

THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

The National Convention.

61. THE part of the National Convention, which chooses the candidates for the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency, is naturally an exceptional one. The stake is enormous; it includes the highest prize to which the ambition of an American citizen can aspire; it confers for the space of four years executive powers extending over a whole continent, among others that of patronage, which has in its hands the life and death, so to speak, of about 300,000 office-holders scattered over the face of the Union; it may settle the destinies of the rival parties for many a year to come. The citizen who pays no heed to the affairs of his State and of his city, which concern him so nearly, fires up on the approach of the national conventions; but, by a singular piece of inconsistency, he does not take more interest than usual, that is to say, he takes hardly any interest, in the primaries and in the local conventions from which the National Convention will issue like a cast from a mould. The formation of the national conventions is, therefore, left to the professional politicians, and these latter reserve for themselves the greatest number of the mandates, for every vote which helps to make the future President has a high commercial value; it gives its owner claims on the gratitude of the future Administration, which takes many forms, from an embassy in

Europe down to a postmastership in the Far West. They may be estimated at nine-tenths, those delegates who are engrossed by their own interests at the convention. In the crowd of politicians who flock to the conventions all ranks are represented: Senators of the United States, State governors, and so on down to aspirants to modest places; and each of them has an axe to grind.

Composition of the National Convention.

62. The representation at the national conventions is established on a fixed basis: each State sends to them, whatever the importance of the party in that State, twice as many delegates as it has Representatives and Senators in Congress; for instance, the State of New York, which has, in virtue of its population, thirty-seven members of the House of Representatives, plus the two Senators that are allotted to each State indiscriminately, deputes seventy-eight delegates; the State of Delaware or of Montana, which has but one Representative in Congress and its two Senators, sends six delegates to the convention. Besides this, the Territories, represented in Congress by delegates without a voice, and the District of Columbia, not represented at all, are empowered to take part in the conventions. Their populations are not allowed to vote for the President,[1] but in order to develop party life in the Territories, the

[1] The inhabitants of the District of Columbia, which contains the Federal capital, the city of Washington, built on neutralized ground not forming part of any State, and placed under the jurisdiction of Congress, are permanently excluded from voting (except those who have a legal domicile elsewhere). As for the Territories, which are the new parts of the Union, generally reclaimed from the great wilderness of the Far West and not yet formed into States owing to their imperfect economic and political development, they do not acquire the right of voting for presidential Electors until they are admitted into the Union as States.

organizations of the parties concede to them, and to the District of Columbia by courtesy, a representation at the conventions, which consists of two delegates at the Republican, and six at the Democratic conventions. The House of Representatives, having at the present moment 391 members, and the Senate 92 for the forty-six States, the double number of the delegates to the national conventions gives a total of 966 plus 14, or 42 delegates for the Territories of Alaska, Arizona, New Mexico, Hawaii, Porto Rico, the Philippines, and the District of Columbia. In addition an alternate is appointed for each delegate to take his place in case he is prevented from attending.

The four delegates who represent the Senators of the State multiplied by two are chosen by the State conventions, and are called "delegates at large"; the other delegates, who correspond to the members of the House of Representatives, are chosen, to the number of two for each congressional district, by the district conventions.[1] That is the invariable mode of election followed by the Republican party; whereas the Democrats, leaning to the State-rights notion, elect all the delegates in the State convention by the delegations from each congressional district or by the whole convention. This conception of the representation of the State, of a highly centralizing character, has received, in the Democratic party, a still more serious application in the form of the "unit rule," which restricts the right of the individual delegates to vote according to their preferences; the State convention, whether it elects only

[1] Except in the States of Wisconsin and Oklahoma where the delegates to national conventions are elected in the primaries.

the four delegates at large or all the delegates, can order them to vote as a unit at the National Convention, in accordance with the decision of the majority. For instance, if in the State delegation of seventy-two members instructed to vote as a unit, thirty-seven delegates are in favour of a certain candidate, the votes of the other thirty-five delegates are passed to his credit, although they are hostile to him. The State conventions of all the parties, without distinction, often give the delegates instructions to vote for a particular presidential candidate. However, these instructions leave the delegates a certain latitude so that in reality the delegates come to the National Convention with full powers.

Call for the Convention.

63. The convention meets in the summer of the "presidential year," that is to say, of that in which the people will have to choose, on the first Tuesday in November in leap year, the presidential electors who, according to the letter of the Constitution, elect the President and the Vice-President. The business preliminary to the convention is entrusted to the national committee of the party, which is appointed every four years, in the National Convention, by the respective delegations of all the States and Territories, each of them choosing one member.[1] In the beginning of the year, the national committee calls on the State committees to proceed to the election of the delegates, and, at the same time, fixes the date and the place of meeting of the convention.

The convention city.

The enormous influx of visitors caused by the sitting of the convention, and perhaps, also, local *amour-propre*, make several cities compete for the honour of

[1] In the State of South Dakota the law on direct primaries requires that national committeemen should be elected in the primaries.

having it. They plead their cause before the national committee through numerous deputations. The applicants promise to provide, in addition to a large sum of money to defray the cost of the convention and the travelling and hotel expenses of the members of the national committee and their wives, all the elements of comfort required by visitors, including fine weather.

Convention "aspect" of the city.

A few days before the opening of the convention, the city in which it is to be held assumes a special aspect, "a convention aspect." The streets, adorned with a profusion of flags and bunting flying over the crossings, the hotels inhabited by the delegations, and other political "head-quarters," are thronged by a huge crowd, "a convention crowd." Favoured by "convention weather," it makes a continuous hubbub, "a convention stir," from morning till evening, and even later. The whole town is swamped with "enthusiasm," "convention enthusiasm," or, if the expression is preferred, "pre-convention enthusiasm." The arrival of the delegations provokes the first outbursts of it. At the station a solemn reception awaits the delegation. Zealous political co-religionists formed into clubs for the duration of the presidential campaign, or delegations which have already arrived, go to meet the new delegation and welcome it with harangues and applause re-echoed by the shouts of the assembled crowd. Then the whole company walks in a procession to the hotel in which the delegation has engaged rooms. To the sound of drums and fifes, in the midst of a frenzied crowd, the new arrivals march past, adorned with badges, medals, and ribbons bearing the name of their State.

Each State delegation has its head-quarters in a

hotel, known from afar by a large sign and flags. It is the meeting-place of all the citizens of the State who attend the convention, either to help the different candidates in the campaign or as spectators. If all of them do not receive a plentiful supply of drinks and cigars at the head-quarters of their State, they are all sure to obtain badges with the name of the State there; endless batches of men and women come to fetch them, and it is not until they have pinned them on their breast that they consider themselves in proper trim and, as it were, entitled to swell the crush and the uproar prevailing in the city. The number of visitors who have come simply as sight-seers is enormous. It is a huge fair which attracts people from all quarters. The streets adjoining the head-quarters are blocked to such an extent that it is sometimes necessary to stop all wheeled traffic. Inside the hotels matters are still worse, especially in the evening, when the visitors are joined by the inhabitants of the city after their day's work.

Presidential candidatures.

64. The presidential candidates are almost always numerous. They are spoken of a very long time before the meeting of the convention as "presidential possibilities." During the year which precedes the meeting of the convention, in a good many States the general feeling, or rather the feeling of the politicians, settles down in favour of one of its more or less eminent citizens as candidate for the Presidency of the Union. This feeling stamps him as the "favourite son" of his native State and makes him a competitor. Every national convention is confronted with half a dozen or more "favourite sons" of somewhat unequal merit and reputation. Some have had a fairly long political

Favourite sons.

experience either in Congress or as member of the Cabinet or State governor; others, and this is not so common, have hardly had an opportunity of winning their spurs in public life, but have achieved a local position, especially through the arts of the politician. Some are not known at all outside their own State, the popularity of others extends beyond its limits, and a few have a national reputation. Side by side with these candidatures brought forward with perfect good faith, there are others which are a mere speculation — almost a form of blackmail. A powerful boss who is absolute master of the delegation of his State, since it was chosen by *his* Machine, runs a candidate with the sole object of selling his withdrawal at a high figure. The candidate thus marked out for the part of pawn is, perhaps, the only person unaware of the fact. To the same end the boss sometimes gets himself nominated as presidential candidate by the State convention. Among the genuine candidatures, a good many are put forward only as a matter of form, without any chance of success, simply by way of tribute to the distinguished citizen who represents the dignity of the State for the occasion.

Dark horses.

Perhaps the good fortune of being a "dark horse," who will be chosen at the eleventh hour in preference to more distinguished aspirants, is in store for some of these "favourite sons," and they will be looked on as "dark horse possibilities"; but the "dark horse" is just as likely to be an outsider and to appear at the last moment only. The dark horse is not necessarily an obscure personage; on the contrary, he may be very well known in the country and perhaps be extremely popular,

but he does not appear to command acceptance as a presidential candidate. On the other hand, some of the candidates, one or two, are brought out of the ruck from the very first. Their great national reputation, their high rank in the party, or their character, which exercises a fascination over the masses, give them an exceptional force of attraction. They are not only "favourite sons" of their States, but general "favourites"; and the personality of this or that "favourite" appears to be so commanding that he becomes the "logical candidate" of the situation. But that is no proof whatever that he will be adopted by the convention; the "favourite," as we shall see, is more likely than not to be beaten.

The presidential "boom."

65. To whatever category the aspirant belongs, even if he is a hot "favourite" and the "logical candidate," the progress of his candidature must depend on the herculean efforts put forth during the few days which precede the convention, and in the course of the session itself. Each aspirant has at his disposal for this purpose not only the delegation of his State, which plunges wildly into the fray, but numerous special workers. Their efforts are directed not only to the delegates, whose votes are asked for, but also to the outside multitude, with a view to creating a moral atmosphere favourable to the aspirant and pressing on the delegates with the weight of public opinion. This twofold propaganda, which constitutes what is called "the boom" or "booming," in political slang, is full of dramatic and spectacular incidents. The part of the programme intended for the outside public is addressed almost exclusively to the senses. True, speeches are made to the public, mass meetings are got up in front of the hotels, and speakers

discuss the situation and the merits of the candidate from the balconies. But the favourite plan is to make the candidate popular by demonstrative methods, — by exhibiting and shouting out his name, by spreading abroad the reproduction of his physiognomy. The head-quarters of each candidate are provided with large bales of his portraits, with leaflets relating his glorious life, and, especially, with badges bearing his name and his likeness, which are distributed to all comers.

The most important part of the boom of the candidate is enacted in the streets and consists of concerts, serenades, parades, and processions, by day and by night. The persons figuring in these processions, who are often obliging auxiliaries impelled by disinterested "enthusiasm," are imported by hundreds and thousands from the candidate's own State and elsewhere. They are formed into companies, generally wearing a special dress, and, headed by a band, they walk through the streets to show how many admirers the candidate possesses. The smarter their bearing and the more picturesque their uniform, the more they impress the crowd in favour of the candidate. Along with these sights for the eye, the "boom" includes a very important vocal element, in addition to the band. This consists in bellowing out the candidate's name; the aforesaid companies, in the course of their processions, or special bands, numbering perhaps hundreds of persons, scour the streets uttering more or less articulate cries in which the candidate's name can be distinguished. They overrun the hotels, and, jostling each other in the passages, execute their repertoire, consisting of a single

refrain, "Jones for President!" or, at the most, some lines like the following: —

> He's a runner; he's a winner;
> Wahoo waugh! Wahoo waugh!
> Billy McKinley! Billy McKinley!
> Wahoo waugh! Wahoo waugh!

Behind the scenes.

66. The conversions effected by the boom in the street cannot be of importance. Not so with the boom which goes on inside the various "head-quarters," by more refined methods and which aims directly at the delegates. The managers of each aspirant endeavour to spread abroad the impression that their client is most likely to obtain a majority; that it is, consequently, good policy to join him instead of persisting in the support of an aspirant doomed to defeat. They quote, with some stretch of their imagination, the delegations which have "mentioned" or even "endorsed" their aspirant. A few members of the delegation are detached as "missionaries," and visit the head-quarters to make proselytes. They are received courteously and listened to attentively; but a straightforward answer is seldom given them. Everybody is on his guard; the ground on which one treads is full of pitfalls. Everything depends on the combinations which are being formed elsewhere, and you never know exactly what to believe; sinister rumours are continually circulating; you live in a state of perpetual apprehension. In reality, it is all a matter of bargaining: they calculate, they appraise, they buy, they sell. The bargain is rarely stated in definite terms; there is a tacit understanding that the delegate who gives his vote will have a claim on the lucky winner.

Only a small number of delegates are bought straight

out with cash. This is especially the case with the negro delegates of the Southern States, in which the local organization of the party, and notably of the Republican party, having but few followers, often keep up a nominal existence simply in order to have the right of sending delegates to the National Convention. This class of delegates sells itself to the highest bidder; but, mindful of his dignity, the coloured gentleman plays a deep game and at first refuses to treat, and then, when the price has been agreed on with him, perhaps he has to be watched, and, to prevent him from coming in contact with the representative of a rival aspirant, who might entice him away, he is "shadowed" by a sort of detective, who never lets him out of his sight. Mines and countermines are laid the whole time. Laborious negotiations proceed all along the line; it is a continuous series of conferences, of councils of war, of confabulations, in which the leaders expend and exhaust their energies. When lastly an understanding about the candidates and the programme has been reached, the final result is not any more of a certainty; the convention almost always has great surprises in store.

Opening of the Convention.

67. The sittings of the National Convention are public, and generally attract from 10,000 to 15,000 spectators. The members of the convention alone number nearly 2000 persons, consisting of about 1000 delegates and as many alternates. The convention, therefore, always sits in a building of vast size, and generally erected for the purpose. The opening of the doors is awaited by an enormous crowd, a portion of which will be excluded for want of tickets. This gathering is taken

advantage of to start a propaganda *in extremis* in favour of this or that presidential aspirant: the vocal performers use what voice they have left; here and there a few impromptu orators perhaps deliver speeches on the political situation. A crowd of hawkers offer emblems in the form of walking-sticks, pins, buttons with the likeness of their man, small national flags, paper fans which the heat makes acceptable, etc. The attitude of the crowd is excellent; it exhibits the good humour and indefinable air of intelligence which are the unfailing characteristics of American crowds.

At last the doors are thrown open, the crowd rushes in and occupies all the seats in a twinkling, without any disorder. The scene which meets your gaze just at first is unquestionably a very imposing one: the eye can scarcely take in the amphitheatre, the benches and galleries are black with people, the bright July sun plays upon the human sea through the innumerable panes of glass which form the roof of the building. All the galleries are hung with flags and bunting encircling the portraits of the great ancestors of the Republic, the illustrious Presidents. A muffled hum of voices fills the vast enclosure like the mutterings of the ocean gathering its waves before it lets loose the storm, while from above issue other sounds of a clearer and more melodious kind: on a gallery over the platform an orchestra, completely hidden by the hangings, plays popular airs.

In the meanwhile the chairman of the national committee ascends the platform, knocks on the desk with the gavel, and calls the convention to order, after which a clergyman offers up a prayer to invoke the

blessing of Heaven upon the labours of the assembly. The clergyman is chosen without distinction of cult or sect. The Republican convention of 1896 was opened by a rabbi. The prayer recited by the minister is of his own composition; sometimes this prayer steps out of ecclesiastical commonplace, assuming a mild tone of theological freedom, or even sounding a note of protest against the existing social and political order of things.[1] After the prayer the chairman of the national committee, on behalf of the latter, submits to the convention the names of the temporary organization of the convention, which are, as a rule, adopted by the assembly without debate. The temporary chairman receives the gavel from the chairman of the national committee and delivers a speech, which is hailed with applause and shouts. This is the first explosion of the enthusiasm of the crowd, which is destined to reappear only too often in the course of the session.

The convention begins by selecting its four great committees, viz. the committee on credentials, on permanent organization, on rules and order of business, and on platform or on resolutions. The roll of all the States is called, the chairman of each delegation announces the names of the members, one for each committee, whom it appoints to act on them. Thereupon the convention adjourns, and the committees set to

[1] Here is an extract: "Almighty God, Father of Men and Ruler of the universe . . guide then the choice of this convention so that its nominees in character and conviction shall represent the spirit of modern democracy, a progressive democracy, of a democracy that is arrayed on the side of the masses as against the classes, and that strives to lift from the shoulders of the people the burdens borne for the benefit of the favoured few."

work at once in order to submit their reports on the following morning.

Reports of the committees.

68. The most important reports of the committees are those of the committee on credentials and of the committee on resolutions. The former decides all the cases of contested seats. These last are always numerous; sometimes individual delegates contend for the position, at others two complete delegations appear for the same State, each claiming to be the duly elected one. These rivalries hardly ever represent different currents of opinion; they proceed exclusively from the desire for "recognition," — the delegation which is admitted will be able to aspire to favours at the hand of the Administration which the convention will bring into existence. As in the State convention, the committee on credentials generally admits those who are supported by the local regular organization of the party, and if there are two complete delegations of a State they are often reconciled by the admission of both, with a half vote for each delegate. After the report of the committee on credentials, which is almost always ratified by the convention, comes up the report of the committee on permanent organization, which submits the names of the permanent officers of the convention. This list, which, by the way, is settled beforehand by the national committee, is accepted without opposition. The permanent chairman delivers a long speech on the political situation, repeatedly and frantically interrupted by cries of approval, which are a sort of instalment offered by the crowd of the shouts with which it will shortly receive the platform to be submitted by the committee on resolutions.

The platform is supposed to be the party's profession of faith and its programme of action. Usually it presents a long list of statements, almost on *omni re scibili et quibusdam aliis*, relating to politics, in which everybody can find something to suit him. It is a catalogue revised and enlarged from one convention to another. If a new problem is beginning to stir the country, if any question not only of a political but of a social or humanitarian nature is interesting public opinion for the moment, the platform hastens to re-echo it, in order to show in words the party's solicitude for the particular cause. For instance, the scandals of the spoils system having exasperated opinion and made "civil service reform" a question of the day, the platforms of both parties hasten to add a strongly worded paragraph in favour of the reform, which all the delegates in quest of spoils of course hate like poison; and every future platform reaffirms the pious declaration. If there is an urgent problem which demands a straightforward solution, the concoctors of the platform endeavour to word it in language which can bear different constructions, to compose a "straddling" one. The reader will remember that such are the traditions of the national conventions, and he is aware of the part which this conjuring away of the problems of the day has played in political contests. One part of the platform, however, is quite unequivocal; it is that in which it usually arraigns the rival party for its sins and crimes, its unredeemed pledges, its nefarious policies when in power, and so on. The principal object of the platform is, in the present day, as formerly, to catch votes by trading on the credulity of the electors. The de-

The platform.

clamatory form and the ambiguous statements of this document of the party both tend in this direction. As an indication, therefore, of the policy of the future administration elected on this platform, the latter is of no great value. In this respect, the letter of acceptance of the candidate adopted by the convention, in which he states his aims and his views on the great questions of the day, is far more important. The platform has just as little significance and authority for Congress.

Nominating speeches.

69. After the adoption of the platform all the States are invited, in alphabetical order, to introduce their aspirants. Those who have any respond to the invitation by putting up speakers to support the claims of their "favourite sons," or, in general, of the men whom they prefer. These nominating speeches are looked on as the æsthetic treat of the entertainment. The eulogium of the aspirant is generally pompous and bombastic; it tries to be at once persuasive and affecting. It dwells on the aspirant's special chances of being elected if he is adopted as a candidate; it tells the story of his life, beginning with the days of his childhood and his youth. If they have been full of toil and hardship, so much the better: that will melt the hearts of the audience; if he has had to go barefoot for want of shoe-leather, that is a real godsend; the people, "the plain people," will recognize in him "one of themselves," and the others will share this feeling out of democratic snobbery. For there is nothing so becoming in American society as the humble beginnings of a successful man, as the poverty and misery which have faded into a reminiscence in his life. Whatever the real position and the notoriety of the aspirant, the

speaker who eulogizes him never considers himself under any restriction in the choice of terms for glorifying him; the speech teems with the most extravagant epithets and with metaphors of extraordinary boldness. The orator lays under contribution the poets, mythology, modern history, ancient history, and that of Rome in particular. At the Democratic convention of 1896 a candidate was introduced in these terms: "We give you another Cicero — Cicero to meet another Catiline." Another candidate, a farmer from the West, was put forward as "that illustrious statesman and patriot, that Tiberius Gracchus"; and the speaker adjured the convention to vote for the American Gracchus "by the ashes of your ancestors; by the memories of your great and venerated dead; by the love which you bear to your children; by the duty which you owe to posterity; in the name of all that men hold sacred." In the majority of cases, the authors of these impassioned appeals know perfectly well that their clients have not the faintest chance of obtaining a majority in the convention, and all the delegates and the public are aware of it too; but the grand specimen of eloquence is none the less delivered and listened to with conviction, for, as in the theatre, if the actors and the audience did not look as if they believed that it has all really happened, there could be no play at all.

It is remarkable, as illustrating the psychology of the American elector, that for more than seventy years, from the date at which one finds the prototype of the nominating speech, the national convention style of eloquence has not changed. In the speech, delivered at the Democratic convention of 1835, in favour of the

candidature of R. M. Johnson to the Vice-Presidency, we read as follows: —

Who is he? If, Mr. President, you could transport yourself to the "Far West," you would find upon one of her green and sunny fields, surrounded by the implements of husbandry, a personage whose plain and simple garb, whose frank and cordial and unostentatious bearing, would tell you that he had sprung from the people — that he was still one of them, and that his heart, in all its recollections, its hopes, and its sympathies, was blended with the fortunes of the toiling millions. . . . Sir, his deeds rely not for recollection or blazonry upon musty records, nor yet upon caucus or convention addresses; they have been spoken in the thunders of victorious battles, they have been written upon the hacked and broken armour of his country's invaders. . There is a voice from the great valleys of the West; from all her cities and cottages. There is a voice from the East, from the North, and the South; there is a voice from the fields of the husbandman, from the workshops of the mechanic, from the primary assemblies of the people, from the conventions of neighbourhoods and States, calling aloud for the elevation of the war-worn soldier, this tried and uncorruptible patriot, this advocate of the destitute and downtrodden, this friend to freedom and to man. Such, sir, is Richard M. Johnson.

Let us now turn to a nominating speech made half a century later. I take at random an address delivered at the Republican convention of 1884 in favour of a candidate who obtained 13 votes out of 813.

X. was born in North Carolina. He draws from southern blood and southern soil and southern skies the generous chivalry of a nature that abhors cant and hypocrisy and falsehood, and feels the stain like a wound. Thirty-four years ago he came, a poor, barefooted, penniless boy, to the rugged soil of Connecticut, where breathing its free air, listening to its free speech, and taught in its free school, he laid the foundation of a manly character and life in principles which are as enduring as Connecti-

cut's everlasting hills. . . . The fierce light that beats against a presidential candidate will explore his record in vain, and he will come out brighter from the blaze. His life is gentle, and the elements are so mixed in him that nature might stand up and say to all the world, "This is a man." His nomination would take the people, for he is what the people all love — God Almighty's noblest work, an honest man. Such a nomination would sweep from the storm-beaten coast of the Atlantic to the Golden Gate of the peaceful sea. With him elected in vigour of his life and plenitude of his powers, beloved at home and respected abroad, with our free institutions and our imperial domain, we should need no Bartholdi statue standing at the gate-way of commerce with uplifted torch to typify the genius of liberty enlightening the world.

The same type of eloquence was conspicuous in the recent national conventions, down to those of 1908, though sometimes other tunes, more sober, resounded, and some really eloquent speeches have been made.

Demonstrations on the nominating speeches.

70. Every speech is interrupted and brought to a close by more or less frantic shouts; being looked on as a criterion of the aspirant's popularity, these outcries impress the delegates, make the weak hesitate, and sometimes decide the wavering. The campaign managers of each aspirant, therefore, consider these manifestations as a card in their game, and procure them by means of a paid *claque*, judiciously distributed over the enormous hall. This is the last and the most impressive act of the "boom" organized on behalf of the aspirant; inside the convention building the boom becomes an apotheosis. As soon as the aspirant's name is uttered, the delegates who support him and the paid applauders jump up on their seats and break into cheers or other less articulate cries, which are immediately taken up by a more or less considerable

section of the crowd. The latter are only too ready to make a row, they have almost a physiological need of this relief; it is enough for the *claque* to give the signal for them to go into convulsions. If the aspirant is a favourite, a very popular man, whom the forecasts place in the first flight for the Presidential race, the delirium reaches an indescribable pitch of intensity. Hardly has the speaker pronounced his name than his portrait, which has been held in reserve, is hoisted aloft and carried about the hall, every one is on his legs, shouting, screaming, tossing hats and handkerchiefs into the air, waving small flags and open umbrellas. It is a sort of pandemonium or Bedlam. The chairman with his gavel is quite helpless, it is in vain that he tells the band to play in order to tranquillize the assembly; a duel begins between the orchestra, which energetically strikes up the "Star-Spangled Banner," and the yelling crowd; now and then a few sounds from the instruments are audible, but they are instantaneously drowned by the shouting. The orchestra tries to play "Dixie," or "The Girl I Left Behind Me"; it is of no avail, the crowd refuses to listen. The paroxysm is at its height. Here a delegate takes off his coat, hoists it on a walking-stick, and, waving it with both hands, begins to dance, probably in imitation of King David dancing before the Ark. Another enthusiast, at the further end of the hall, creates a precedent himself by taking off his boots and waving them one on an umbrella and the other on a stick. The crowd does not stop until compelled by fatigue, by exhaustion. At last the long string of panegyrics is at an end; wearied with oratory and overcome by the tremendous physical exertion,

every one takes breath to prepare for the new and supreme emotions to be afforded by the ballots.

71. The voting for the candidates is attended with the same publicity as all the proceedings which have gone before it: as the name of each State is called out in alphabetical order the chairman of the delegation announces to whom it gives its votes. In the Democratic conventions, the votes are all credited to a single candidate, that of the majority of the delegates ("unit rule"). In the Republican conventions, where each delegate is entitled to vote as he pleases, the chairman of the delegation announces several candidates, if there is occasion for it, mentioning at the same time the number of votes given to each. The majority which an aspirant must obtain to be proclaimed candidate is a bare majority with the Republicans, and a two-thirds one with the Democrats. The manœuvres and the intrigues relating to the person of the future President, which have been carried on by managers and powerful State bosses, may be paralyzed by the force of public opinion, which sometimes imposes its candidate on the convention with inflexible persistency.[1] However, such a direct pressure of opinion has been of extremely rare occurrence till these latest times. When the balloting begins, the situation is generally still very uncertain, for

The balloting.

[1] Thus, for instance, in 1892 the head politicians of the Democratic party, along with Tammany Hall, were hostile to Cleveland's candidature; but in the country at large it aroused the greatest enthusiasm; and the politicians had to yield and give him a majority at the first ballot. His Republican rival, Harrison, who then filled the Presidency and was seeking renomination, was opposed by several State bosses, who combined to ensure his defeat; but the bulk of the delegates did not follow them, believing in Harrison's success with the electorate, and brought him in also at the first ballot.

it depends entirely on intrigues and manœuvres which, although they have been prosecuted unremittingly, have not yet led to a result. The first ballot, therefore, is hardly ever decisive; it barely gives approximate indications of the strength of the rival forces, which are so far merely mustered.

Manœuvres of the rival champions.

During the first ballots the great object of the aspirants and their champions is to wear out their rivals, especially the favourites, to disable the eminent aspirants, in order to clear the ground. It is only a sparring match; votes are given to aspirants and withdrawn from them; are borrowed for one ballot and scrupulously returned at the next. On their side, the favourites, as well as the aspirants of the second class, try to gain the votes of the humble aspirants, to "get their strength." When the delegates who are favourable to them have satisfied themselves, after a few ballots, that their own candidates have no prospect of success, they go over, with a quiet conscience, into the camp of a more fortunate aspirant. But they must discern well the *winner*, they must join the ranks of the most "available candidate."

Available candidates.

The general conditions of "availability" are already familiar to us, and it need only be added that the aspirant to the Presidency must combine them in the highest degree in all that concerns the negative qualifications for the position. As for the others, if the aspirant has a certain amount of popularity, if he is personally "magnetic," so much the better, that will be a good card in the game. His physique is not immaterial either. His political position, perhaps a very poor one, is capable of being advantageously made up for

by that of his State. If this latter is a doubtful State, in which the parties are evenly balanced, it may not be able to resist the temptation of having one of its sons in the Presidency, and may, on this occasion, give his party a majority, which majority will, perhaps, be decisive for the victory of that party in the whole Union, if the State is a large one like New York, for instance, disposing of thirty-seven votes in the Electoral College. A State of this kind is, consequently, looked on as a "pivotal" State, and the aspirant who belongs to it is *ipso facto* an available candidate.

Dark horses.

It may well happen, and more often than not it does, that after several ballots none of the favourites succeeds in detaching enough votes from his rivals to obtain a majority. This is the moment for the "dark horses" to appear on the course. They must not forestall this moment; if they come forward at the first ballots to try conclusions with the favourites, they run the risk of being hopelessly beaten at once. Their merit resides precisely in the character of *makeshift* which they possess; and they can only turn it to account when a feeling of weariness comes over the assembly.

Demonstrations at balloting.

72. Each ballot is followed with the utmost anxiety by the whole assembly. During the roll-call of the States the adherents of the various aspirants applaud and utter shouts of delight as soon as a delegation announces that it votes for their man. When the result of the ballot is proclaimed, an explosion of enthusiasm, often ending in a grand uproar, greets a rise in the total of votes obtained by an aspirant. If the rise is accentuated at the following ballots, the crowd of dele-

gates and spectators becomes delirious. More or less unearthly shrieks, cries of animals, hats thrown into the air, red umbrellas opened, flags and banners frantically waved, start the pandemonium afresh. The standard of the State to which the aspirant in question belongs, planted in front of the seats of its delegates, is pulled up, and in a twinkling it is surrounded by the standards of several other States, which salute it, and all form a procession, which marches several times round the hall along its unencumbered passages. The sitting is practically interrupted. At the next ballot, the hero of this manifestation has perhaps lost some votes, and the star of another aspirant has suddenly risen; with the fickleness that belongs to crowds, the convention, forgetting the man whom it cheered barely half an hour back, rushes madly after the new momentary favourite of fortune. The uncertainty as to the final result continues down to the ballot in which an aspirant who already holds a good position is reinforced by an important group of delegates, who give up their aspirant or aspirants.

The "break."

This change of front, which soon grows like an avalanche, constitutes the "crisis" or "break," and raises the excitement of the audience to its highest pitch. With nerves strained to the utmost, the public awaits the dramatic moment from the second ballot onward, and says to itself on each occasion: "It will come this time." As soon as the "break" takes place, the whole assembly has an epileptic fit, stamping on the floor, yelling, carrying round standards in a procession, etc., in the way with which we are familiar. The politician whose influence has brought about the

break will, of course, be in good odour with the candidate when the latter has become President; he can count upon an embassy or some other "good thing."

Sometimes the ballot in which the "crisis" has taken place is the last, sometimes one or two more ballots are required to gather a majority round the name of the lucky winner; but his success grows more marked with each moment, and a little sooner or later he will "be landed." When his triumph appears tolerably certain, a sort of panic seizes on the delegates who had hitherto voted for other aspirants, and they rush to join the winner in a wild race, which is called the "stampede." One after another, they are in a hurry to retract their vote before the ballot is closed. Many changes in the votes are no longer of use to the winner, who already has his majority; but delegates who want to "get on his band wagon" make them all the same, in the hope of establishing a claim on the future President. As soon as the result of the last ballot is announced, the champion of one of the defeated aspirants proposes to the convention to make the nomination of their fortunate rival unanimous. The motion is carried, a grand uproar of the regulation kind, with the war-dance of the standards, greets the happy event, the band strikes up "Hail to the Chief," and the assembly goes mad for half an hour or so.

The "stampede."

73. But there remains the selection of a candidate for the Vice-Presidency. This task does not detain the convention long; not that the aspirants to the second dignity are less numerous, but because the assembly is already exhausted, and because it is not in the habit of attaching much importance to the post of

Selection of the Vice-President.

Vice-President, whose influence in the government of the Union and the distribution of offices is *nil.* The conventions bestow the honour as a consolation stakes on one of the defeated aspirants to the Presidency, or on a citizen of a different part of the country from that to which the candidate adopted for the chief magistracy belongs. If the latter comes from a State in the West, the Vice-Presidency is given to an Eastern man to silence the jealousy of the populations of the East. It is desirable that this person should also be very rich, "a man with a barrel," so that he can contribute a large sum to the expenses of the election campaign; and often the place is one for a millionaire. The procedure for the selection of the candidate for the Vice-Presidency is just the same as for the Presidency: roll-call, introduction of the aspirants in high-faluting speeches in which they appear surrounded by a halo of virtue and glory; several consecutive ballots, and the shouts of the crowd; but these latter already betray a certain weakness and lassitude, the arms move mechanically, all the voices are hoarse.

At last, after a session of several days, the end is reached; the convention adjourns *sine die.* All is over. As you step out of the building you inhale with relief the gentle breeze which tempers the scorching heat of July; you come to yourself; you recover your sensibility, which has been blunted by the incessant uproar, and your faculty of judgment, which has been held in abeyance amid the pandemonium in which day after day has been passed. You collect your impressions, and you realize what a colossal travesty of popular institutions you have just been witnessing. A

greedy crowd of office-holders, or of office-seekers, disguised as delegates of the people, on the pretence of holding the grand council of the party, indulged in, or were the victims of, intrigues and manœuvres, the object of which was the chief magistracy of the greatest Republic of the two hemispheres, — the succession to the Washingtons and the Jeffersons. With an elaborate respect for forms extending to the smallest details of procedure, they pretended to deliberate, and then passed resolutions settled by a handful of wire-pullers in the obscurity of committees and private caucuses; they proclaimed as the creed of the party, appealing to its piety, a collection of hollow, vague phrases, strung together by a few experts in the art of using meaningless language, and adopted still more precipitately without examination and without conviction; with their hand upon their heart, they adjured the assembly to support aspirants in whose success they had not the faintest belief; they voted in public for candidates whom they were scheming to defeat. Yielding only to their self-interest or to fear, they submitted without resistance to the pressure of the galleries masquerading as popular opinion, and made up of a *claque* and of a raving mob which, under ordinary circumstances, could only be formed if the inmates of all the lunatic asylums of the country had made their escape at the same time. And all the followers of the party, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, are bound, on pain of apostasy, to vote for the choice of that assemblage.

Yet, when you carry your thoughts back from the scene which you have just witnessed and review the line of Presidents, you find that if they have not all

been great men — far from it — they have all been honourable men; and you cannot help repeating the American saying: "God takes care of drunkards, of little children, and of the United States!" On second thought you find of course some earthly saving power. That is the power which resides in the people who will not vote for an objectionable man. The fear of the people is the beginning of the wisdom of the politicians, as we shall realize after further discussion of their ways.

Still the National Convention remains none the less a distressing sight, and the last national conventions of 1908 have exhibited it to a particularly high degree. The question is therefore seriously considered now as to the expediency of excluding the public from the conventions and admitting only the Press.

NINTH CHAPTER

THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

74. WHEN the curtain falls on the conventions, the nominations made by the rival parties have to be submitted to the acceptance of the sovereign people. Up to this point not much has been seen of the people, although it has been talked of a good deal; everybody quoted its authority, acted in its name, took pledges on its behalf, but this everybody was made up almost exclusively of the class of professional politicians. Hitherto the contact between the party Organization and the electorate has been very slight; they were much less in touch with one another than is the case with the party representatives and the bulk of the electors in England. Here the action of the Organization upon the electorate is compressed into the efforts made during the brief space of election time, and it is hardly a figure of speech to say that the American party Organization snatches the verdict from the electorate at a single stroke, that it carries the position by a sort of furious assault. The result is not the less brilliant, on the contrary even; for the besieging army supplied by the American Organization is infinitely superior to the troops of the English party organization in point of generalship, recruiting, dash, and discipline.

The politicians face the people.

The national committee.

This is the proper time for reviewing that besieging army. We will begin with the staff. It is represented in the first place by the "national committees" of each party appointed every four years at the national conventions. Consisting of one representative from each State and each Territory, the national committee numbers above fifty members. Its principal duty consists of conducting the presidential campaign throughout the Union. After the close of the campaign the national committee falls into a state of suspended animation to revive at the expiration of three years on the approach of the next national convention, which it will convene and of which it will take charge until the latter is definitively organized. The chairman only of the committee may be considered as a standing power and may exert political influence, if he is a strong man. A tendency in that direction manifested itself during McKinley's administrations. But usually the national chairman possesses a certain authority with the President of his party chiefly in matters of patronage. Nominally chosen by the committee, the chairman is as a rule selected by the presidential candidate. He need not be at all a member of the committee, he may be an outsider. The chairman directs the campaign from his head-quarters in Chicago or New York assisted by a small executive committee. The members of the national committee generally work on the spot in their respective States, conducting all the operations like a commander of a corps under orders from head-quarters. The chairman wields the power of a commander-in-chief with regard to everybody. However, it is the tact and other diplomatic virtues which he

must possess in a high degree that make his power a reality. As a matter of course, he must be above all a great organizer.

The most delicate of the duties devolving on the chairman, or on the chairman jointly with the treasurer, is to procure the sinews of war. He appeals for funds to the trusty followers of the party, to the clients of the party, if the latter has any special ones, such as, for instance, the manufacturers who benefit by the protectionist policy of the Republican party; the intimate friends of the candidates for the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency who are well off are certainly not forgotten. A clever, ingenious, and energetic chairman always manages to fill the chest. But the important thing is to make a good use of the contents. Like a general who chooses the strategic points for the disposition of his troops, the national chairman distributes and skilfully brings to bear his pecuniary resources on the different points of the immense electoral battlefield formed by the Union. The powers of the chairman in all matters of finance are discretionary; he is accountable to no one, all the more since a good deal of the expenditure incurred could not bear the light of day. At least that was the case till the last presidential campaign of 1908. The legitimate duties of the national committee, which also absorb very large sums, consist mainly in organizing the oratorical and literary campaign on behalf of the "ticket" of the party over the whole area of the Republic. The methods of this propaganda will be examined further on in detail.

75. Alongside the national committee, each of the two great parties possesses another central committee

Congressional committee.

at Washington, — the congressional committee, composed of members of Congress chosen by their party colleagues of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Its duty is to ensure the success at the congressional elections of the candidates who bear the party label. Considerations of general policy are even more foreign to the congressional committee than to the national committee. Its powers expire with the legislature from which it emanates. The congressional committee intervenes actively in the election campaigns in the "off years," that is to say, those years in which the congressional elections, which take place every second year, do not coincide with the presidential election. At the request of the candidates it sends them speakers and "political literature" for distribution, and, perhaps, money as well. On the opening of the presidential campaign the congressional committee places all its resources at the disposal of the national committee, foregoing its own initiative even in what concerns the congressional elections, for in the "presidential year" all the elections follow the fortunes of the contest for the Presidency.

Local committees.

The powers which the national committee wields for the whole Union are exercised in a subordinate capacity in the States by the State committee, and in each county by the county committee. These three committees multiplied by the number of the counties, which amounts to about 2500, form so many rays running from the centre to the electoral circumference. The *personnel* of these committees contains only the officers of the army of the party Organization, from the generals down to the subalterns. Below them extend the vast battal-

ions of the privates and non-commissioned officers enrolled in the local committees of the city wards, of precincts and, perhaps, also of the "school districts." The total of these troops, of all the parties combined, may be estimated, of course quite approximately, at from 900,000 to 1,000,000 men, exclusive of the corps of officers supplied by the higher committees, which contains not less than 50,000 persons. While in England, the militants of the party Associations are almost all amateurs, inspired solely by sentimental considerations, and submitting to discipline only so far as it appears to them compatible with the needs of the cause and with their personal dignity, in the United States almost all those who compose the immense army of the party Organization are experts, trained in their business, and spurred by the incentive of personal interest which bends the will and silences all conflicting sentiments. In fact they are, for the most part, themselves candidates for, or aspirants to, places, or they are trying to get them for relations or friends. They are obliged, in order to compass their ends, to work for the other candidates of the party, all along the line, with the same zeal which they would display in their own behalf; for each candidature is only an atom, a line of the ticket of the party which the average elector accepts or rejects in a lump. In voting for Mr. Taft as President, he will vote at the same time for the Republican candidates for the other offices, those of State Governor, Congressman, etc., to the end of the list. Between all the committees, therefore, from the national committee down to that of a remote corner of the Far West, there arises a co-operation founded on the closest community of interest.

This army constitutes the regular and permanent machinery of the Organization. It is increased, for the term of the campaign, by numerous auxiliaries, who may be divided into three categories: humble servants engaged by the committees and paid by the job; individuals who come forward out of devotion to the party or enthusiasm for the cause; and, lastly, auxiliaries formed into companies, troops organized for the occasion. The most common type of these corps of free-lances is afforded by the clubs.

Political clubs.

76. The American political clubs last only for the campaign. Permanent political clubs are not entirely unknown in the States. In New York, in Philadelphia, and in several other important centres, there are, of course, large party clubs, but they are rather social than political, and, like all American clubs, are more aristocratic than the English clubs. The absence of a nobility, of an upper class created by the law and recognized by the national manners, is made up for in certain American cities by coteries, which form into magic circles, to which admittance can be gained only by showing one's credentials, or what they are pleased to consider as such. This tendency to social exclusiveness has not spared the select political clubs. But with that they are much less homogeneous than the English clubs as regards the political views of their members, because social considerations fill too large a place in the choice of the members, and especially because the latter are getting to change their party more and more frequently, while remaining members of the club. Lastly social relations in the United States, while sometimes painfully narrow, are superficial, and, amid the kaleidoscopic

Select party clubs.

existence of the Americans, lack the stability which would give them the property of a political cement.

Alongside these political clubs, which are little distinguishable from non-political ones, there are others, in several large cities, of a much less exalted kind, whose members are almost all politicians, and, for the most part, politicians of low degree. Apart from the mercenaries of politics, the "workers," they are frequented only by the men who buy their influence, such as contractors for public works and government purveyors. The most distinguished of these clubs, if it is permissible to use the epithet, is the Democratic Club of Tammany Hall in New York. The subscription to the clubs is purely nominal; the expenses are almost always borne by a head politician, a "leader," who makes the club the citadel from which he directs the political operations necessary for getting hold of an elective post for himself or for his favourite candidate. The clubs of the politicians combine politics and pleasure, by organizing balls in winter, excursions in summer, outings, "chowder parties," or "clam bakes"; but even in these cases, the politicians keep to themselves and their own set without attracting the bulk of the electorate.

Politicians' clubs.

At the end of the eighties of the last century attempts were made to develop the system of permanent clubs and to recruit their members on a broader basis. The Republicans formed clubs all over the territory, and combined them into national federation, the Republican National League. In reality most of the clubs have only a nominal existence, — hardly one club in a hundred has premises of its own ; generally they hire a room for the occasion, and their meetings are

few and far between. The members are, to a great extent, office-seekers and young men attracted by the titles of president, vice-president, and other dignities which the clubs provide for their youthful vanity. The Democrats have followed the example set by their rivals, but their National Association of clubs collapsed some time ago owing to internal divisions. The Republican National League, however, is not much more of a living body.

Saloons as political clubs.

77. There are, however, permanent clubs, and in very large numbers, which, without bearing this name, and without having any ostensible connection with politics, wield very great electoral influence. These are the drinking-saloons, especially in the large cities. With the lower orders, who spend their leisure time in the bars, the saloon-keeper is "guide, philosopher, and friend." The party organizations and the candidates therefore find him their most valuable helper for manipulating the electorate.

Campaign clubs.

Of course, the drinking-saloons take in only the dregs of the population. To lay hand on the higher strata of the voters, the election organizers form for the duration of the campaign "campaign clubs" of citizens who in ordinary times pay little or no heed to politics. The great date of the presidential election reminds them of their civic duty. They respond piously to this sacred appeal and enrol themselves in a club flying the colours of their party or of its candidate for the Presidency. For the two or three months that the campaign will last, they meet, perhaps, every evening, they listen to speeches which glorify their candidate, they sing political songs, absorb enthusiasm for the party ticket, and diffuse

this enthusiasm around them, in the club and outside it. This action and reaction comes all the easier to them since, very often, they do not present fortuitous aggregations of atoms brought together in a haphazard way, but groups formed in accordance with more or less natural affinities, due to a common occupation, race, or religion. Thus each Presidential campaign is the signal for an outburst of clubs, Republican and Democratic, of commercial travellers, of clerks of dry-goods stores, of lawyers, of merchants, of railroad employees; of workmen's clubs formed, not by wards, but by workshops, the workmen in a large factory dividing, perhaps, into two clubs, the one Republican, the other Democratic; clubs of coloured men; Irish, German, Jewish, Polish, Swedish clubs; and even Republican or Democratic "cyclists' brigades."

Marching clubs.

A special kind of campaign clubs are "marching clubs," with the particular duty of walking about in procession and making a noise in the streets and squares, in honour of the party and its candidates. We have already come across clubs of this kind in the city where the National Convention was held, and where they carried on a gymnastic and vocal propaganda in favour of the presidential aspirants. Their usefulness to the parties is of a twofold kind: they help greatly to keep up "enthusiasm," and they gather to their standard young electors attracted by the quasi-military organization of these clubs; their members wear a special uniform and hold varied grades, such as captain and colonel.

Of late years the craze for campaign clubs has spread to the schools, the colleges. In almost every college or university there are formed, for the duration of the

campaign, clubs of students to help the parties by speaking or by other forms of propaganda.

The number of the electors enrolled in the campaign clubs is undoubtedly very considerable, and can hardly be below 1,500,000 or 2,000,000. If to these volunteer forces are added the paid combatants, they will all together, with the regular army of the party organizations, make up the enormous total of 4,000,000 out of an electoral population of 15,000,000 or 18,000,000. That is to say, there is one militant, entering heart and soul into the fray, to every four or five electors.

Women and politics.

78. The European visitor, familiar with the great rôle of helpers of the regular party organizations played by women in England, would look for the same in the United States. Being aware of the exceptionally independent position enjoyed by women in America, he would expect that they would have plunged into militant politics even far more extensively and ardently. In reality, nothing of the kind takes place. After half a century of victorious progress in the social sphere, American women have remained outside political life, both because they have not shown a strong enough wish to get into it themselves, and because of the resistance offered by the men. The agitation in favour of the "rights of women" no doubt began earlier in the United States than in England, towards the close of the first half of the nineteenth century, but it encountered only indifference and hostility. Till this day it is only in a few rudimentary States of the Far West (Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Idaho) that women have obtained political rights, and in another western State (Kansas) the rights of municipal electors, whereas in

England women are entitled to vote in all local elections throughout the country. The question of woman suffrage is raised by its champions with tenacity, from year to year, in the different State legislatures; but it is invariably negatived, either by one or other House of the legislature, or, when its advocates have succeeded in carrying their vote and obtaining the assent of the executive, by the people which has to ratify constitutional changes.

But on the contrary in the domain outside of politics public opinion and the legislature have shown themselves much more ready to make way for women. In more than half of the States of the Union women are entitled to vote at the elections for school officers, and to be elected to those posts. They have been gradually admitted to embrace such vocations and professions as they please, up to that of the bar, and even of the ministry in certain churches. The traditional inequalities sanctioned by common law in the civil status of women, and especially of married women, have been abolished in one State after another. In social relations woman was already almost the superior of the man, being treated by him with an exceptional deference which has a faint savour of the chivalry of the Middle Ages. Carefully sparing the woman, in the well-to-do or even barely well-to-do classes, so much as the knowledge of his anxieties about the struggle for existence; taking upon himself alone all care and all responsibility — the man ensures for her leisure which woman often knows how to make a good use of by devoting herself to mental culture. The pursuit of this culture, even when of a superficial kind, leads women to fall back upon

themselves rather than turn upon society. Moreover, they have no personal grievances to urge against society. Those among them who incline to active life find a noble employment for their faculties in the moral and philanthropic movements to which American women have rendered, and continue to render, conspicuous service. "Practical politics" is the last thing to tempt their ambitions; it has been made too contemptible by the "machines" and the "bosses."

Women in party politics.

79. In the four States where women have the suffrage they are participating more or less, rather less, in the electoral battles and squabbles alongside of the men. But in the rest of the Union they have taken very little interest in party politics till quite recently. There were in the old parties a few instances of women sent as delegates to conventions in the Far West. In the election campaigns women were rarely met with canvassing for candidates. Nor did they make their appearance on the stump, except in the West, where the spectacle of a woman on the platform did not shock the simple folk of the new districts; and the greater the distance from the East, the less was this sight unusual. The presidential campaign of 1896 was marked by rather important changes in all these respects. Both in the East and in the West a good many women "took the stump" with ardour. In several places the women, like the men, organized themselves in campaign clubs. It would appear even that "marching clubs" were formed, composed of women, which manœuvred in the streets in military fashion with the precision of old stagers.

Since that celebrated campaign the part of women in

electioneering has somewhat increased, though not to a very appreciable extent. For the duration of the campaign women's clubs are formed, — there is even a League of Republican Women's Clubs. Women sometimes canvass and distribute literature. At the last presidential campaign, of 1908, New York and even Boston had their meetings with women speakers. Much more important is the part played by women in the "third parties," recruited from social classes inadequately representative of society at large, such as the Prohibitionists and Socialists. The Prohibitionist party, which is more a philanthropic organization aiming at the suppression of the sale of liquors, was the first to countenance the co-operation of women. In their conventions women delegates were always a common feature. The Socialists, who have recently come to the front in American politics, muster a good number of women in their fighting ranks.

Other public activities of women.

While the immense majority of women keep aloof from party politics, many are beginning to play a great rôle in the contests of public life on a non-partisan ground or even in opposition to the regular parties. Guided by the same feelings which incline women to social action in the philanthropic sphere, a number of women descend into the arena to fight for the purification of municipal life contaminated by party politics; they form even, for this purpose, special organizations confined to their own sex and take an active part in election campaigns. At the same time women are displaying great energy in improving the sanitary conditions, in beautifying the city and the village, giving care to the tenement-house and to the public parks and

play-grounds. Organized all over the Union into clubs and federations of clubs, they endeavour by concerted action to watch and to influence legislation on industrial conditions affecting women and children; they secure better factory laws, enactments on child labour, on school matters, etc. And that influence of women on legislation is growing.

Electoral registration.

80. So much for the contingents of the party Organization and its auxiliary troops. The contingents of the voters which they have to encounter are formed under the law which lays down the electoral qualifications. Nevertheless, their real composition is, to a certain extent, subject to the influence of the party Organization, intervening in the preliminary procedure necessary for establishing each individual elector's right to vote. This procedure consists of a periodical registration of all the electors. While manhood suffrage, pure and unadulterated, predominates in the United States, in several States of the Union more conditions are attached to the right to vote than in many a country of universal suffrage in Europe.[1] Although complicated with these limitations on the right to vote, the electoral registration laws of America are not as a rule very stringent.

[1] Apart from the general conditions of age and residence, some States, such as Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and most of the Southern States, require the payment of a poll-tax, or of municipal taxes (South Carolina); Rhode Island gives the municipal vote only to persons rated in respect of property of a minimum value of $134; the constitution of Connecticut imposes a moral and intellectual qualification: "a good moral character and the ability to read an article of the constitution or of the codes"; Massachusetts, Maine, Delaware, and Wyoming also insist on the elector being able to read the constitution; California, since 1893, and New Hampshire, since 1903, require the same from the new voters; most of the Southern States have recently inserted in their revised constitutions similar

In England electoral registration is hampered with so many restrictions and formalities that the elector is rather prevented from making use of his right; in the United States, the law was anxious to give the electors every facility for exercising their rights, at the risk of admitting even non-qualified persons.

For a considerable time preliminary registration was unknown in the United States; every citizen who claimed to be qualified was allowed to give his vote without further ado, unless his right was contested there and then, in which case the point was decided forthwith. This régime soon gave rise to grave abuses, which became worse with the development of the large cities, especially in New York, where it was no longer possible to know who was who in the ever-growing multitude of electors. The steady influx of European immigrants in its turn increased the opportunities for fraud. The electoral contests were decided by persons who were not qualified to vote or who were not even naturalized Americans. The introduction of a preliminary system for ascertaining the real electors had evidently become a vital necessity, and yet it was opposed as an anti-democratic and anti-republican measure.

The laws on registration.

81. At the present moment there are still some States which have abstained from passing laws on this subject; in two States (Texas, Arkansas) registration is even prohibited by the constitution; lastly, the State of Indiana, which had a law, no longer has one. According to the laws in force in the various States, which present a very considerable variety, a periodical census

provisions requiring that the electors shall be able to read or even explain the text of the constitution, framed with the sole object of keeping the negroes away from the poll.

of all the electors is held on the eve of the presidential elections, or before the general elections in the States, or every year (in New Orleans, for instance), or, on the contrary, at much longer intervals, every ten years (as in Boston). The electors have to appear in person before the registration officers and state their qualifications. When they have been questioned as to these qualifications and examined in the reading of the constitution, in places where the law requires this attainment, they may be required to confirm their declarations by an oath which is administered to them there and then. If the declarations made by the electors before the registration officers are not contested, the persons making them are duly inscribed on the register. Every elector can appeal to the courts of law against a refusal to make an entry or against a wrong entry. Besides this, to facilitate the detection of mistakes, the complete lists, or, at all events, the lists of the contested electors, are published and posted up. Only in a few States are the lists drawn up otherwise than on the strength of the personal declarations of the electors; in some of these (Massachusetts, excepting the city of Boston) the government officials, especially the assessors of taxes, themselves undertake the duty of collecting and verifying the necessary information, by analyzing the lists of taxpayers or by making house-to-house visits. The persons in charge of electoral registration always bear an official character, but in the majority of cases they are representatives of the parties, chosen by the public authority in equal numbers from each of the two great parties, or even appointed directly by the committees of the parties. This connection of the registration

officers with the political parties puts constantly their independence and honesty to a severe test.

The political parties interfering with registration,

82. The committees of the parties intervene very actively in the registration business. On the eve of the registration, they send their adherents reminders, which mention the date and place of registration; they look up defaulters and bring them in person before the registrars; they pay the poll-tax on behalf of electors in places where it is required for obtaining the vote;[1] they instruct a lawyer to conduct the appeals of their followers in the courts; and, lastly, in a good many cases, they help to bring on the register creatures of their own who have no right to be there. Indeed, the extraordinary facilities for registration put a sort of premium on these frauds: to wit the personal declaration of the elector which lies at the root of the system, and which is accepted until disproved, the shortness of the terms of residence, and the share which the parties too often have in the appointment of the registration officers. One of the favourite expedients resorted to for obtaining fraudulent registration is "colonization" of electors: vagabonds and tramps are imported into the city and housed in lodgings for a few days to manufacture a sham legal domicile entitling them to be put on the register. Often this formality even is dispensed with: fictitious names and addresses are given. Or, again, the same persons present themselves for registration in several election districts, or even several times in the same district under different names.

[1] To prevent them from so doing recent laws enacted in some States require the payment of the poll-tax a good while before the election.

and with naturalization.

Along with registration, the party organizations devote themselves, in much the same way, to the naturalization of aliens likely to increase their electoral contingents. They make them go through all the necessary formalities, pay the naturalization fees for them, and keep them warm, so to speak, for the coming election. Not unfrequently the committees or the candidates interested used to procure naturalization for aliens not entitled to such by the law. The reader will remember how Tweed's Ring manufactured naturalized electors *en masse* in New York. These frauds were much facilitated by the extreme liberality of the American naturalization laws, and by the careless way in which the courts of law verified the qualifications of the applicants. In certain States, the party committees got aliens admitted just before the elections in regular batches, a hundred or more per day, of people who barely understood English. The Federal law requires a previous residence of five years for obtaining the status of an American citizen, but in a good many States (in fifteen) the immigrants are allowed to vote after a term of residence in the State varying from three to eighteen months on a simple declaration of their intention to get naturalized. Besides this, even in States where definitive naturalization is required, it is sufficient to obtain it on the eve of the election to have the right to take part therein.

Some of these evils have been remedied by the latest Federal law of 1906 on naturalization. That law enacts that the applicant for naturalization must be able to speak English; that there can be no final hearing on the petition until at least ninety days have elapsed from the time the petition is filed; and, what is still more impor-

tant, that every petition must be submitted for preliminary investigation to special examiners, established for that purpose by the act. These latter, supplied with the information filed on every immigrant in the Bureau of Immigration in Washington, will be able to collect all the data for the decision of the court, so as to prevent the getting of the naturalization by false testimony.

Preliminary polls.

83. The real campaign begins by reconnoitring the electoral ground and making an estimate of the forces available on each side. All over the Union, in each locality, polling lists are drawn up showing which party each elector is going to vote for; if he has not made up his mind or has not given an indication of his choice, he is ranked among the doubtful. Special agents, paid by the party committees, scour the country to assist in this task and to make a more exhaustive political enquiry about each particular elector; they take down a quantity of details relating to his person, his race, his religion, his business, his circle of acquaintance, his pecuniary position, to whom he owes money or is under any obligation. In short, a sort of political and social survey is made for each locality. The data supplied by it are grouped and transmitted from one committee to another, along the whole line, up to the national committee. Each committee will derive from it useful information for determining its policy in its respective territorial area: the national committee will pass over all the States in which the preliminary poll has disclosed a very large majority favourable or hostile to the party and to its candidate for the Presidency; it will concentrate all its efforts on the States in which the majority is inconsiderable or uncertain, where the parties

are so well matched in point of numbers that a small group of electors may turn the scale in favour of either side. On the other hand, while the State may be a hopeless one for the national committee, the local committees may plunge into the fray with all their might in the several districts of that State in which the party is able to return congressmen, members of the local legislature, and other office-holders.

Generally there are two polls, if not everywhere, at least in the "doubtful States": the first goes on in the beginning of election time, in the month of September, and serves to find out both the politics of the voters, and who are entitled to register; the second poll is completed at least a fortnight before the election and furnishes hints for the dispositions to be made at the eleventh hour. Owing to the exceptional care which was always bestowed on the taking of the poll, its results used to be considered very trustworthy. But for some years past they have become more and more tainted with uncertainty, owing to the abrupt oscillations in the political sympathies of the electors, who have grown more capricious and more independent. Then the voters conceal their politics more than before. Again the poll is a very expensive affair, and it can with difficulty be afforded not only in the "off years," but even in presidential campaigns when, as in 1908, there is little money in the chest of the national committees.

Meetings.

84. Foremost among the electoral campaign weapons is the public meeting. Eloquence is lavished on the electors in a continuous series of meetings of every kind, from mass-meetings which attract thousands of people,

to small gatherings in out-of-the-way country spots, attended by a handful of farmers. Appealing even to the lowest strata of the electorate, who can hardly be reached by print, the meetings, in fact, do succeed in attracting voters of every degree. How many of them are really influenced by the meetings, is another question. However, it is only in the "presidential years" that this great flocking together of voters occurs. In the "off years" the stump is more or less idle, and special circumstances are necessary to make the election campaign become "a speaking campaign" in these years. The meetings are got up by the committees; this is one of the most important, if not the most important, of their duties. The national committee supplies eminent orators, who have a national reputation, and who travel, by its direction, from one State to another, to make the great hits; the State committees procure the less important speakers. The best speakers are engaged, like tenors, at so much a night for a certain number of evenings, or by the week, and are more or less highly paid. True, they have met recently with a mighty competitor in the phonograph, which reproduces before audiences the great speeches of the presidential candidates themselves. The speakers who come next in order of merit only get their travelling expenses and perhaps a small allowance for their time. Lastly, the great majority give their services gratuitously in the hope of obtaining a share of the booty, after the victory, in the form of some place or other. Yet the number of paid speakers is on the increase. The speakers are taken principally from among politicians and lawyers; they also include journalists and

Speakers.

business men; one meets, too, with clergymen who are sometimes more successful on the stump than in the pulpit.

The candidates, of course, have their place marked on the list of orators, which, however, is not the most important one; they are lost in the crowd of speakers who have to fight for the ticket, especially at the general election of the presidential year, when all the notabilities of the party descend into the arena, Senators of the United States, State governors, or even ex-Presidents of the Republic. However, some of the candidates, the aspirants for the higher offices, such as State governor, or mayor, usually cut a prominent figure in the campaign. The candidates for the highest office, for the Presidency, till quite recently, on the contrary, kept carefully back. It was considered undignified for a man who aspired to become the head of the nation to enter the lists in person. But that is so no longer. The presidential candidates are stumping the country all the time. They run from one State to another, from East to West, from North to South, in a "whirlwind tour," and speak before audiences flocking as to a show, until they become hoarse. Along with his marching orders the speaker pretty often receives from the committee ammunition, in the form of arguments, of facts, of statistics. It not infrequently happens that the committee asks a speaker sent on an important campaign to submit to it beforehand his speech, which it will touch up, perhaps, pointing out what should be said and what left unsaid. Sometimes there have been at the head-quarters regular training schools for the campaign speakers.

The committees take care to suit the speakers to the

audiences. To meetings mainly composed of Irishmen speakers of the same race are told off; the vast agglomerations of Germans and Scandinavians, which are found in so many States, are harangued in German or in Swedish or Norwegian. The committees do not forget either that speakers who would be successful before country audiences may cut a very poor figure in the cities, and *vice versa*. The "hard-headed" districts must be dealt with by speakers who can appeal to reason, who can present good logical arguments; in other places it will be enough to excite passions and prejudices and to tickle the innate sense of humour of the Americans.

Stump oratory.

85. It is eloquence of this last kind which is the predominant type in the party meetings, and which has given the terms of "stump" and "stump oratory" their peculiar meaning. The fact is that beneath a frigid exterior, under a reserved and taciturn appearance, the American is a highly sensitive, emotional, and excitable being. A telling hit fires the American, another sends him on the opposite tack. Rhetorical language, sonorous and grandiloquent phrases, take him at once. By calling up before him the grand image of his native land, of the great American people, one is always sure to move him or make him think that he is moved.[1] The speaker who has a lot of funny stories, who has a good supply of jokes and can use them in a telling way, is perhaps a still greater party asset in the campaign.

[1] Hence the advice which a comic paper puts in the mouth of an old politician giving hints to his son who is about to make his first appearance on the stump: "Stick to the American eagle and to our own dear native land as much as possible."

Decline of great political oratory.

Political eloquence, of the true kind, which once shone with such lustre in the United States, has steadily declined for the last fifty years. The Clays, the Websters, the Calhouns, have left no successors; their traditions are only a reminiscence of the past. The great political eloquence departed with the old leadership towards the close of the epoch which preceded the Civil War. It was one of the attributes of that leadership. Nor was it only the giants whose names have just been mentioned who wielded over their fellow-citizens the sublime supremacy of speech; they shared it with numbers of less important men. They all exerted it on every important occasion, as a duty to discharge to their fellow-citizens, by enlightening their conscience, by guiding their conduct.

The social and political conditions which undermined the old leadership have also deteriorated representative government, which in declining inevitably drags down with it political eloquence. With the development of the system of secret committees and party caucuses, in Congress as well as in the State legislatures, and with the advent of the Machine, which filled the assemblies with inferior men, these bodies had ceased to be deliberative assemblies; it was no use making a display of eloquence when the vote was decided beforehand by the resolution of the party caucus or of the committee; the most cogent reasoning, the most solid debate, was of no avail against the word of command of an influential boss. The speaker had not to take pains, he was talking only "for Buncombe." [1]

[1] During the celebrated debate on the "Missouri Compromise," in 1821, which settled the question of slavery in the Territories, a

And before long the House thought it could and should dispense with these speeches, by authorizing its members to insert in the official reports, the *Congressional Record*, the harangues which they had not delivered, but had only announced in a few words; they were supposed to "develop their remarks" in the printed text. Nor had the members of the legislative assemblies any need to be good speakers to be returned by the electors; "getting the delegates" became far more important; and it was to the cultivation of that art, and not of the art of oratory, that embryo politicians henceforth devoted themselves.

The wonderful rise of the Press, with a power of expansion unparalleled in any other country, has helped in its turn to diminish political eloquence. It has driven the old purveyors of political thought into the background; and the latter naturally try rather to adapt themselves to the new state of things, to serve the public expeditiously and cheaply, that is to say, with little expenditure of intellect on the part of either the producers or the consumers. Lastly, the very nature of the questions which interest public opinion at the present day is not very favourable to a lofty and aspiring style of eloquence. During the forty years which preceded the Civil War, the controversies bore upon the very foundations of public order, on the rights of the people, on the dignity of man outraged in

representative of a North Carolina district which included the county of Buncombe insisted on speaking, in spite of the advice of his friends. "It is for Buncombe," he said to them, "that I want to speak." From that time, "to speak for Buncombe" passed into a proverb, denoting speeches with an objective other than the convincing of the audience.

the slave. These questions, which thrilled the public mind, gave place, after the war, to economic problems, concerned with tariffs, currency, etc., which turn upon considerations if not of a sordid at all events of a very prosaic kind.

Stump oratory improving.

86. It is only fair to add that stump eloquence, anything but lofty, has of late years come under the salutary influence of the serious discussion of economic facts and ideas. "Spread-eagleism" is going out of fashion; public speaking becomes more argumentative. Again, the stump has benefited, without any merit on its part, by the decline of parliamentary eloquence: eminent or distinguished speakers, for whom there is not much room in Congress, take their eloquence out on the stump in important conjunctures. This fact has become of real significance in the course of the last decades. I want to make still another general reservation in regard to the character of political eloquence in America. There are in the United States orators of real distinction, of lofty intellect and great talent; but one must hasten to add that they are extremely rare, and some of them do not always combine with these gifts that nobility of political character without which the most remarkable orator is only a gladiator. Most of the speakers who are engaged by the party committees to perform feats of oratory before the assembled multitude call up to the mind precisely this image of gladiators. The very euphemisms with which the language of the day describes stump orators, by calling them "spellbinders," and saying, "let loose the spellbinders," recall the combatants of the arena.

Orators and gladiators.

Below the spellbinders there are in the service of the committees other oratorical gladiators, of a very modest kind, hardly deserving the title, but who are none the less useful. To this category belong workshop and factory talkers, workmen who have the gift of the gab and who are paid by the committees to harangue their comrades. Other speakers, equally humble, are told off to speak at street-crossings to crowds which they gather round them. They often meet with opponents, who are only accomplices, and the two sides carry on a sham debate, which of course always ends in the discomfiture of the party opposed to that for which the accomplices are working.

No "joint debates."

Genuine debates between two opponents are becoming more and more rare. Formerly these "joint debates" were tolerably common; they were almost a public institution in the South. But they were also known in the North and West. The most celebrated of these debates, which took place in 1858, between Lincoln and Douglas, then rival candidates in Illinois for the post of Senator, was followed with rapt attention by the whole Union; they were discussing before the country the burning question of slavery. After the Civil War, the face-to-face debate, which enabled the citizens to grasp then and there the arguments pro and con presented by public men, disappeared almost entirely. In the South, however, beginning as soon as the border-state of Maryland, the joint debate still reappears sometimes.

Not to convert but to "raise enthusiasm."

The meetings are attended almost exclusively by the faithful followers of the party; not only the adherents of the opposite party but even the "doubtful" electors

keep away from them. If the election campaign is a particularly fierce one, the opponents go to the meeting to create obstruction, which reaches a high pitch of turbulence, but is not marked by personal violence or abuse. The object and effect of American political meetings is not so much to instruct and convert as to edify the audience, to strengthen them in the party creed. The great expedient of the American stump is to "raise enthusiasm." Yet the value for propagandist purposes which the meetings possess in this respect, in the eyes of the parties, is declining, for the intellectual standard of the American voters is getting higher, — they are not so easily caught by the artifices of the stump. Besides the action of the meetings is not absolutely confined to the production of "enthusiasm." In the course of a presidential campaign so many speeches are made, the question of the day is turned inside and out to such an extent, that it is impossible for the electors not to learn something. The great mass only carries away, it is true, extremely hazy notions, but a small section ends by getting more or less insight into the problems under discussion.

The Press used by the parties.

87. While the meetings are intended to take the bulk of the electors by storm, down to the least cultivated, the more intelligent electors are canvassed by means of the Press, newspapers, pamphlets, leaflets, etc. In the eyes of the organizations, the newspapers do the most execution. The rôle of the Press as a party instrument dates from the rise of the political wire-pullers in the States of New York and Pennsylvania, and it asserted itself definitively under Jackson. By way of reward, the Press was allowed from the outset

a share in the profits of the spoils system. After the Civil War, when the importance of the Press increased with the general development of the country, the co-operation of the newspapers became still more valuable, and it rose in price; editors or proprietors of big newspapers were appointed offhand to diplomatic posts of the first class, to Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg.

In the case of the big newspapers the party committees need not trouble themselves, they will do their duty. But with regard to the thousands of small country papers there is an elaborate system of getting them to publish what the committees want. The national committees work through the commercial houses which supply the small papers, too poor to have contributors of their own, with ready copy of every description. At the beginning of the election campaign and even before that they offer them free of charge *plate matter*—stereotyped columns of news or articles which might be put straight into the printing press. Or again they use the *patent inside*, they supply the country editors with *ready prints:* the sheets are printed on one side in some central point to be forwarded to all their customers around, who will fill up the other side with local news and advertisements. The copy is supplied by the national committees. These latter also issue during the campaign a bulletin containing editorials, interviews and other items, which is supplied to any newspaper willing to use them. By those methods about twelve thousand country dailies and weeklies (more than 7000 Republican papers and about 4500 Democratic ones) are regularly fed with party stuff.

The effect is not very great on intelligent readers. The influence of the newspapers is on the decline. There is less confidence in their truthfulness. Editorials are much less read than before. They no longer shape public opinion. The intellectual leadership has passed to the magazines, the weeklies and the monthlies. The public look to the daily papers for the news. But there is a way of presenting the news; it may be coloured according to requirements. That is a powerful weapon, which is largely used and abused in the interest of political wire-pullers as well as of big businesses, without the public suspecting anything. On the other hand there has grown up within the last years the practice of using newspapers by direct advertising — committees and candidates buy space even in independent and opposition papers.

Educational value of the Press.

While for the party committees the papers may be the best medium for reaching the voters, they are not of great value as an agency for instructing and enlightening the electorate. That indeed is the last thing for which the papers care; they have given up, along with the old style of dogmatizing, of lecturing the reader, the loftier duties of the Press; they consider themselves first of all as purveyors of facts and they vie with one another in presenting them in a way that aims at the imagination of the readers and panders even to their lower instincts and tastes. The fitness of things, the sense of proportion, are in many papers conspicuous by their absence. True, the sensational journalism through its very exaggerations has been in those last years somewhat helpful in awakening the public conscience deeply sunk in lethargy. However,

it cannot play the part of a regular educational agency in the economy of society. Again there is a most hopeful phenomenon manifesting itself, which will later be dwelt on more fully, that is the rise of an independent Press, not attached to party, with a wholesome influence which is likely to grow and to develop. But the dependence of the daily Press on money interests and its deficiency as a political educator of the country are still predominant features.

Lack of political instruction.

88. The character of the newspapers is the more important that the Press is the chief source of political instruction of the electoral masses, outside election time. In the interval between the elections the party organizations take but little pains to disseminate political facts and ideas among the electors, as is done by the party Associations in England. Nor do the American electors possess the chances offered by the periodical meetings of English M.P.'s with their constituents. To keep in the good graces of their electors, the English members of Parliament are obliged to "come down" as often as possible and make speeches; while defending the policy of the party with which they are connected, they have to discuss the legislative measures which that party brings forward or opposes. The members of Congress, and still more those of the State legislatures, are relieved from this obligation by the fact that they owe their seats in the first place to the Machine or to their skill in "getting the delegates"; besides, the shortness of their elective term makes it almost useless for them to present themselves to their electors before the next election, at which they will more often than not be prevented from standing again, owing to the

rule of rotation in office. Moreover, public men, as a rule, rather avoid facing public opinion; they shirk stating their views on the questions which interest it; for fear of compromising themselves they remain "non-committal": rightly or wrongly they hold that under a democratic government it is not permissible for those who wish to be honoured with the confidence of the people to have views of their own, or, at all events, to put them forward; that it is better, with their ear always bent towards the ground, to steer their course by the shifting views of the multitude.

Left without guidance by those who could or should have supplied them with a clue to the labyrinth of political affairs, American citizens have no means either of acquiring the rudiments of political knowledge before beginning life, that is to say, at school. Political and historical studies have been much neglected in American instruction. These studies have made marked progress, during the last two decades, in the sphere of higher education, but not so much in secondary and almost none in elementary schools. However, earnest efforts have been made within the last years to fill up that gap. In most of the high schools instruction is now given in *civics*. But that teaching is too formal; it is almost exclusively concerned with the anatomy of the body politic.

Deficiency of critical spirit.

No doubt, special instruction in this or that subject, even if it bears directly upon politics, is not enough to make the citizen; it is the cultivation of the intelligence in general that improves the judgment of the future elector; it is the sum total of what is taught in the school that develops it. Are not the American schools, then,

very good? They are so, certainly. But the manner and the methods with which instruction is given in these schools provoke strong criticism on the part of competent Americans, who are of opinion that the teaching almost exclusively aims at cramming, at exercising the memory at the expense of the faculties of observation, of analysis, and of reasoning; that this teaching is of too formal and mechanical a kind. Then, too much emphasis is laid on the practical, the utilitarian side of education. The spirit of the education given at school is not less strongly animadverted on by Americans of sound judgment: according to them, that education strives to develop in the young the "patriotic" sentiment in its narrow aspect, which takes no account of the rest of humanity and is apt to look on other countries and other nations, if not with contempt, at all events with an indulgent pity. The national self-sufficiency or conceit thus drilled into the youthful mind, in its turn, does not much help to form the political judgment.

The dissemination of knowledge outside the school, lectures and courses for adults and several other facilities for improving their mind have taken an extraordinary development all over the country. But the culture thus offered hardly reaches the lowest strata of the electorate; with but few exceptions it does not go below what would be called in England the middle classes. The discussion of economic questions introduced recently in the granges of the farmers and in the labor unions may give a stimulus to the political education of the toiling masses.

The great exertions and sacrifices to which Ameri-

cans submit for the spread of education have not been after all in vain, the intelligence of the masses has made and continues to make notable progress; their horizon is broadening, they are getting a better notion of the issues of politics, but without exercising the critical and discerning spirit necessary to save them from the thousand and one pitfalls which beset the elector whose vote is wanted.

Political literature.

89. While working upon him through the Press, the party organizations endeavour to enlighten the voter still more by adding to it the apparently more solid nutriment of "political literature" or "campaign documents." The "literature" consists of pamphlets, leaflets, posters, handbills, etc., bearing on the questions and persons at stake, and, of course, composed in the interest of the party. At each head-quarters there is a "literary bureau" with a staff of writers who draw up the "campaign documents." The most important of these "documents" is the speech of acceptance of the nomination by the presidential candidate. That is the "keynote" speech, which at the very beginning of the campaign is spread broadcast in millions of copies. Then, in numbers as great, pamphlets containing speeches delivered in Congress are sent out, not so much because of their excellence as because they are accorded the postal franchise of official papers. The value of the several "documents" varies; some are more or less instructive, but the great majority consist only of declamation and denunciation of the opposite party. They are not much read, however. The pamphlets are mainly of service for supplying facts and arguments to minor speakers and to the local debaters who retail and

amplify them. The great committees even publish, for use in this way, special repertories, well got up, under the title of "campaign books" or "campaign text-books." There is one category of pamphlet which, being not such dry reading, is more acceptable to the recipients, viz. the biographies of the candidates for the Presidency, and sometimes also for posts of less importance. These biographies are composed in prospectus style for the requirements of the election campaign and are known, in consequence, by the name of "campaign lives"; they form a historical type of their own which has no resemblance whatever to Plutarch.

The type of "campaign literature" which is the most read, and which produces the most effect, is represented by leaflets, or even little bits of cardboard, with a few dogmatic assertions unaccompanied by argument. The controversy on the currency system, for instance, is settled on them by a few figures stating peremptorily that under the gold standard debts have increased by so and so many millions. That is enough for the elector, he is convinced: "I know it's true, it comes from the national committee." The greatest success is obtained by "pictorial literature," that is to say, by cartoons in newspapers and by illustrated leaflets and handbills with symbolic pictures, caricatures, etc., representing, for instance, monometallism in the form of a man with only one eye and one leg, and thus furnishing self-evident proof of the absurdity of opposition to bimetallism. As a large proportion of the electors who have more or less recently come into the country do not understand English sufficiently, the "campaign documents"

which are considered the most important, big speeches, small cards or leaflets, are brought within their reach by translations into their mother tongue, — in German, in French, in Italian, in Swedish, in Polish, in Czech, in Hebrew, in fact in almost all the languages of Europe. Provided with copies of the electoral register in every part of the country, the committees despatch their "literature" to all the electors; but it is the "doubtful electors," as disclosed by the canvass, who are the special object of their attentions; they overwhelm them with communications, and send them at short intervals now a pamphlet, now a newspaper, now illustrated leaflets.

Independent appeals to the public mind.

In particularly grave issues, the party Organization does not monopolize the action intended to influence the public mind. A mobilization of all the living forces of the nation takes place along the whole line. The Church itself, whose absolute independence of the State makes it indifferent to party strife, and its branches of every denomination put themselves in motion when the great problems of the day, or even the person of the candidate, appear to raise moral questions. The pulpit rings in that case with sermons which point out to the voters their duty. Individual citizens, more or less eminent representatives of social groups, or professions, come forward in like manner to throw the weight of their opinion or of their prestige into the scale, by means of a public declaration solicited by an interviewer of the Press or spontaneously addressed to a newspaper. Often the paper takes little plébiscites among these persons by publishing the views of a group of college presidents, of a group of bankers,

of a group of lawyers, of a group of workmen in some trade, etc. Although got up for newspaper purposes, to procure copy, these consultations add to the mass of ideas and opinions put into general circulation on the occasion of the election campaign.

TENTH CHAPTER

THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN (*conclusion*)

The "Chinese business"

90. THE means of propaganda which have just been reviewed and which aim, or are supposed to aim, at the intelligence of the electors, are very largely supplemented by others which appeal to the senses, and are meant to "raise enthusiasm." The reader need only recall the famous presidential campaign of "Tippecanoe and Tyler too," in 1840, to be aware that the art of stirring up the electors by making a noise was at a very early stage brought to a rare pitch in the United States. The noise is produced by a set of regular devices, to which the American organizers themselves give the collective title of the "Chinese business."

Foremost among the usual methods come the mass-meetings, whose principal attraction for the crowd that cares little for political eloquence consists of musical interludes executed by orchestras and choruses. Far more picturesque are the processions and the big demonstrations called parades, of which we have already had a foretaste at the National Convention. Every city and every rural district treats itself to these during the campaign, and people would think themselves almost disgraced if they were deprived of them. We are already familiar with the special organization of "marching clubs," which file through the streets for the glory of

their party. Fireworks, torch-light processions, cavalcades on horseback or on bicycles, bicycle orchestras, aquatic parades with hundreds of boats in a row, parades in the streets attended by large contingents of the followers of the party, are so many means of testifying to the enthusiasm which animates its members. Some of these demonstrations attain really gigantic proportions, such as the great parades in New York, for instance, when more than a hundred thousand men march past a few leading members of the party, sometimes with the presidential candidate himself at their head, accompanied by bands, flags, and banners, in the midst of a million spectators. All classes of the population are represented in the procession, from the princes of finance down to the common people; heads of business firms and members of the bar fall in, shouting themselves hoarse, in honour of the candidates of the party, just like ordinary labourers. The ridiculous side of the spectacle they present does not occur to them nor to the spectators of the show, — it is lost in the feeling of duty towards the party. For they consider that the party is served by making its numerical strength conspicuous, by conveying an impression of the combative ardour which animates its adherents, even if this is achieved by methods savouring of the travelling circus. The electioneering effect of the parades and the marches-past is beginning to decline. Thanks to the spread of enlightenment, those methods are decidedly going out of fashion, as was manifest in the last campaigns.

in country districts.

91. In the rural districts the "Chinese business" produces perhaps more effect. It is there combined with

the forms of intellectual action. The whole neighbourhood is invited to a "rally," a big meeting; the farmers generally come in large numbers, on horseback, in breaks, or on foot, often with their families. Political speakers sent down by the committees hold forth in a covered enclosure to audiences which, especially in the West, are composed of both men and women. In the daytime a "procession" takes place: the faithful followers of the party, adorned with emblems, scour the country, headed by a band; the negro village barber, wearing a costume trimmed with gold, beats time with indescribable dignity. In the evening the houses of all the party faithful are illuminated and a torch-light procession concludes the "Chinese business." The fête, however, still goes on; the speakers reappear, and, in the open air, on the green, by the flickering glare of the torches, they harangue the assembled crowd. But the attention of the wearied public is distracted, there are only a few groups listening here and there, the rest are talking, the young people are flirting in the dim light. Besides, the reporter has already sent off his long telegram to the big newspaper of the district, in which he has somewhat anticipated all the details, like a man who knows what goes on at "enthusiastic manifestations."

The electioneering propaganda also resort to picnics, dances, and dramatic entertainments, etc., with political speeches as interludes. In the old days, before the Civil War, political picnics were in vogue, especially in the South, and were known by the name of "barbecues." In the South and in the West the barbecues still take place; occasionally the programme includes,

besides the political speeches and the meals, athletic contests, dances, sports, horse races. In the East the barbecue is less common and not so picturesque; it is more a sort of fair for which the railroad companies consider it a good opportunity to organize excursion trains.

Campaign buttons.

Lastly, another external device, and a very popular one, is the display of political emblems. The most common party emblems are the badges, and especially the "buttons," small, round tin plates bearing the portraits of the candidates in enamel, with or without a motto. As soon as the election campaign opens all and sundry, old and young, men "worth millions of dollars" and ragamuffins who sell newspapers or black boots at street-crossings, adorn their buttonholes with a party "button," on which may be seen the picture of the great man who is candidate for the post of President or Governor, with the inscription: "I am for McKinley. Are you?" or, "Silver is good enough," "16 to 1," "McKinley and Protection." Even in Congress grave legislators may be seen sporting a button with a motto containing, for instance, the following terse formula which sums up the whole morality of "politics": "Don't kick."

Charges.

92. Another set of practices may be included in the "Chinese business" which tries to impress the imagination through the intellect. These are the charges, the claims, the bets, and the straw votes. The "charges" are libellous accusations brought against the candidates of the opposite party. They occur so regularly in the course of each election campaign that nobody believes them: they are only "campaign lies." Yet they

are brought all the same; they resemble a firework which leaves nothing behind, although for the moment it has made a noise. The "claims" are fore-

Claims.

casts backed by figures which predict success for the party; so many votes are "claimed" for it in advance, so many counties, or such and such a State. A very carefully conducted canvass can no doubt furnish a trustworthy basis for estimating the coming vote; but these estimates or claims are always exaggerated with the object of stimulating the ardour of the "workers" and the generosity of the subscribers to the party funds. The National Committee itself is not above drawing up and publishing bulletins of claims in view of the presidential vote.

Bets.

To confirm belief in the success of the candidates of the party and to decide the waverers, bets laid on the candidates as on race-horses are largely resorted to. It is an old national habit to back one's opinion, even on the most trivial subjects, by laying a bet; formerly there was even a general formula: "I bet you a beaver hat." Now the phrase is simply "a hat." The custom of betting soon spread to elections. At the outset bets in money were made mostly by the politicians. Among the rest of the population the election bet came into fashion first of all in the form of harmless wagers in which the stake was the classic hat, a box of cigars, a bottle of wine, or certain grotesque performances which are much in vogue down to the present day, and which consist, for instance, in walking down the main street with one's coat turned inside out, in wheeling the winner in a barrow, or in rolling a pea along the pavement with a toothpick. But alongside these playful proceedings

the election bet also became a pretext for gambling in all classes of the population and among persons of all ages. It is, in fact, much stimulated by the party committees, who have made it a regular means of influencing the electors, by laying bets themselves, or through others, on their candidates; the more these candidates are backed and the longer the odds given, the more their success must appear certain to the electors who have not made up their minds. The law has intervened in more than half of the States to prohibit election bets, which are often also used as a means of bribery. Persons who bet, or who shall become interested in the bet, are liable to fine, imprisonment, to the loss of the right to vote or to be elected; but all these laws are a dead letter, they are never enforced.

Straw votes.

The "straw votes" are a general rehearsal of the impending election, conducted in certain sections of the population or in certain localities. These polls are held on the stock exchange, in large factories, or other establishments where there are a great numbers of electors. The result of these anticipating votes furnish "evidence" of the strength of the candidate and of the "hopeless" weakness of his rival. Being often taken in a genuine way by a newspaper, for instance, for the purpose of gauging public opinion, these ballots are always apt to influence those electors who like to be on the winning side.

Personal canvass of the voters.

93. The extraordinary development of these electioneering methods, which operate collectively on large masses of electors, by no means excludes the direct action of man on man, first of all in the classic form of the canvass, of the personal solicitation of votes. The im-

portance of the canvass is somewhat diminished in America by the decisive rôle of the nomination, which discounts the result of the election and which makes the candidates bring their efforts to bear, not upon the voters, but upon the delegates to the convention. For instance, in the South, where, owing to the traditional supremacy of the Democratic party, the nomination of the candidate is equivalent to election, personal canvassing is not much practised. But wherever parties are evenly matched, in all the "doubtful" States, it is carried on energetically. The *modus operandi* varies a good deal. The lower strata of the electorate are canvassed by paid "workers." They strive not so much to argue with the electors as to make themselves pleasant; they shake hands with negroes, they invite the bystanders to have a drink. As the decisive moment approaches, redoubled efforts are made to win the "doubtful" electors, one by one; emissaries are sent to them who have a special influence over them, to whom they are under an obligation, or with whom they wish or are obliged to stand well. The canvassers of this sort are zealous auxiliaries who look for no reward but the success of the party and the satisfaction of having contributed to it. The Organization has the moral right to requisition, on the eve of the election, every faithful follower of the party for the work of conversion; and all respond to the pious appeal.

Part of the candidate.

The candidate himself does not always take a personal part in the election, but he must, especially the candidate for the less exalted positions, exert himself in some way or other. He applies to all the voters in-

dividually through circulars and letters. The personal letters, typewritten with the hand signature of the candidate, are the most effective. He sends out cards with his portrait, pamphlets and leaflets dwelling on his qualifications. He advertises in the newspapers and has there, perhaps, a testimonial published above the signatures of men of note. He contributes to charities, he allows himself to be bled by the little politicians for one dollar apiece and upwards, while his campaign managers spend money in the saloons—a thing which he pretends to ignore entirely. He may pay a visit to the most important electors, or even if he is an inferior man, go from one drinking-saloon to another to ingratiate himself with the frequenters of the bars. In the cities, however, it is not so necessary, nor is it easy for the candidate to bestow many marks of personal attention on the electors; he has no points of contact with the heterogeneous and floating populations of the large cities. Personal action will be more effectively exercised over them through the men of the Organization, of the Machine, who are rubbing up against them every day, who always have their net spread to catch them. In the rural districts, on the other hand, the candidate must show himself. He is exempt from the baby-kissing business, which does not exist in America, as it does still in England, but he is not at liberty to shirk that of hand-shaking.

Undue influence of employers.

The civilities of the candidate and the endless variety of arguments employed by the canvassers act, or are supposed to act, by free persuasion. But sometimes these arguments are supplemented or replaced by the pressure exerted, for instance, by employers of labour.

It would appear to be not so uncommon in the East, which is the great stronghold of capitalism; in the West the independent spirit of the workmen makes them less inclined to submit to it. The foreman or the masters give the workmen to understand that the rate of their wages, or their engagement itself in the factory or workshop, will depend on the defeat or the success of the candidate. Bills are posted up in the workshop stating that if a particular candidate is elected, the wages will fall, or the factory will be closed or will have to restrict its output.

Bribery at elections.

94. Lastly, the most direct argument addressed to the personal interest of the elector consists, as in other countries, of the purchase of votes for cash. Electoral bribery plays a considerable part in the political life of the States, and an increasing one. Before the Civil War it was only in three or four large cities, with New York at their head, which already contained a wretched population exposed to the temptations of ignorance and vice, that money was had recourse to for getting votes at elections. But after the war, the exasperation of party spirit and the extraordinary development of the spoils system led to bribery being used as a regular weapon. The rapid growth of the cities, inevitably accompanied by the rise of a poverty-stricken and semi-criminal class, the arrival of wretched emigrants from Europe, and the extension of the suffrage to the besotted negroes, had, in their turn, swelled the venal contingents. The appearance on the political stage of the rich corporations and, in general, of the big industrial and financial concerns trying to pack the legislative assemblies, the executive, and the judiciary, greatly helped

to supply the funds required for buying votes. The economy of the American electoral system, which makes the result of the presidential election depend on a few "pivotal" States, whatever the distribution of the whole popular vote in the Union, has facilitated the concentration of bribery operations, and thereby put a premium on them. These States, ranked among the "doubtful" ones, four or five in number, are "drenched with money" during the presidential campaign for buying the "floaters," the "wavering" electors who sell themselves to the highest bidder. Elsewhere bribery is also practised, but in a very unequal fashion.

In some parts of the Union electoral manners are tolerably pure, but in others bribery is a permanent institution. And what is remarkable and somewhat unexpected is that it is not solely or even principally in the cities that this evil obtains. Even in the contaminated cities bribery is not always individual: the "workers" rather, the small "leaders," are bought, who wield an influence over a certain number of poor voters, and make them vote as they tell them to without paying them expressly for their vote. The parties often secure, in much the same way, the votes of the members of the labour unions: the leaders "sell them out" to the parties, without the workmen having a suspicion of it. The voters who deliberately sell themselves belong, in the cities, mostly to the dregs of the population. The most shameless venality is often met with in the country districts, particularly in the States of the Atlantic seaboard, nay, even in New England, inhabited by the descendants of the Puritans. Votes are sold there openly like an article of commerce; there is a

regular market quotation for them. And it is not only needy people who make a traffic of their votes, but well-to-do farmers of American stock, pious folk who always go to church on Sunday. In some country districts a quarter or a third of the electors make money out of their votes.

Beneficial effects of the Australian Ballot.

95. Bribery was up till lately carried on with all the more facility that the vote was not absolutely secret; the buyer could follow his man to the ballot-box and see if the latter had really put his voting-paper in it. In the same way the foremen in factories kept an eye on their workmen. Voters were even exposed to intimidation and personal violence at the hands of desperate election agents, who prevented them from voting as they liked or forced another "ticket" on them. The scandals which attended the taking of the vote under these circumstances, and the wholesale bribery which marked the presidential election of 1888, were at last too much for public opinion, and contributed to the adoption by almost every State, in the course of a few years, of the great electoral reform known by the name of the "Australian Ballot." The new method of voting, thus called because it is in force in the English colonies of Australia (as also, by the way, in the mother-country), ensures absolute secrecy for the vote by the plan of official voting-papers, distributed exclusively by official agency and deposited by each voter in such a way as to prevent the contents being seen. The names of the candidates of all the parties are declared, in the manner and within the period prescribed, to the public authority, which classifies them all on a single voting-paper printed under its directions. Each elector who comes up to vote re-

ceives from the election officers a copy of the voting-paper, withdraws into an isolated compartment to mark on the list the candidates of his choice, and gives up the paper folded in such a way as to avoid any particular signs. All persons other than those recording their vote are kept at a distance; the public is forbidden to approach within fifty to a hundred yards of the railed enclosure behind which the voting is going on.

The "Australian" system has, in fact, put an end to the open intimidation and to the coercion which were practised on the electors; the elections are now, with few exceptions, conducted in an orderly manner; the public market for votes which was held in New York and in other large cities, outside the polling-places, has also been put down. But bribery goes on just the same and has not much diminished on the whole. Means have been discovered of "beating" the law; devices have been invented which enable the bribers to assure themselves that the bribe-taker has really performed his part of the bargain. In other cases the elector's vote is not bought, but his abstention from voting, which is easy to find out; electors of this kind form a rather numerous class humorously called "fishermen," they are prevented from voting because they have gone out fishing. Or what is still safer and simpler, the elector is paid not to apply for registration; he will not be able to vote even if the other side succeeds in making a convert of him. As generally one party is using bribery because the other does so, the rival organizations in some places decide to stop that practice by mutual agreement. There have been lately many instances of such "gentlemen's agreements." Besides, if bribery occurs much

less than before at elections, it is largely due to the fact that the corrupt practices have been transferred to the primaries, where the decisive battle is often fought.

Penal provisions against corrupt practices.

There are in all the States penal provisions against electoral bribery. But a good many of them (sixteen States and one Territory) went further within the last two decades. Following the example of the English Corrupt Practices Act of 1883, they have dealt with the expenses of candidates and the agency for the disbursement of moneys. The laws enacted in those States require publicity with regard to campaign contributions and expenditures, and frequently specify the authorized expenditures or the prohibited expenses. The candidates, and as a rule the committees too, are ordained to file with the proper authority, after the election, sworn itemized statements of all the moneys contributed or expended by them or through others, directly or indirectly, to secure their election. But some of the most important of those laws, the acts of New York and of Pennsylvania, exempt from that provision disbursements not exceeding ten dollars. This alone is enough to bring the whole law to nought. Some States did not content themselves with the moral sanction of publicity of the election expenditures but added to it a positive one by limiting the amount that may be spent either according to the number of voters or to the amount of salary attached to the office. Some laws expressly prohibit treating and entertainment, payment of naturalization fees, poll-taxes, etc. The more stringent of the State laws require that all the expenditures, except the strictly personal ones of the candidate, should be made through a candidate's authorized agent or

treasurer of a political committee, to secure unity and responsibility in disbursements.[1] A good many of these laws are exceedingly minute in their provisions, and would leave no loophole for the candidates and the committees if they were enforced. But this is not done as a rule. In some States the legislature has extended to primaries and caucuses the provisions relating to corrupt practices at elections, but with scarcely a better effect.

Bribery of election officers and election frauds.

96. The bribery of the electors has its corollary and complement in the bribery of the election officers who conduct the ballot. Dishonest "election inspectors," suborned on behalf of a candidate, used to alter the result of the ballot for his benefit, by admitting deliberately fraudulent votes, by slipping into the ballot-box voting-papers bearing the name of their favoured candidate, etc. In some large cities the election was falsified not so much by the purchase of votes as by these frauds. In the South these practices were introduced, after the Civil War, to "save civilization" from the new coloured electors; but gradually people got into the habit of committing the voting frauds at the expense of white political opponents. The Australian Ballot has remedied this abuse not only by supplying official voting-papers,

[1] One of the most recent laws and probably the most drastic Corrupt Practices Act, the Oregon law of 1908, requires that the books of accounts of every treasurer of any political party, during an election campaign, shall be open to the inspection of the treasurer and chairman of any opposing political party or organization. According to the same Act no publisher of a newspaper may insert any paid political matter without stating therein that it is paid, while payment or accepting of pay for advocating or opposing editorially the nomination or election of any candidate is to be punished as a corrupt practice.

but by providing that the ballot-boxes shall be placed in the voting-room so as to be under the eyes of the public; that they shall be examined before the polling begins, and that the parties or the rival candidates shall be at liberty to station watchers and challengers within the polling rooms; and, lastly, that the counting of the vote shall take place in public and forthwith. These measures have stopped the frauds to a very considerable extent, but they have not been sufficient to put an end to them altogether. To make them quite impossible, in spite of the dishonesty of "election inspectors" and the want of vigilance on the part of the public, voting machines have been invented in which the elector has only to touch a knob or knobs to record his vote for one or more candidates, and in which an automatic counter registers the number of votes obtained by each candidate.

Laxity of public opinion.

No doubt the most effective invention would be one that would touch the public conscience, for if the voting frauds and the bribery of electors occur so frequently, and if they are inadequately repressed by the law, which, however, has no lack of prohibitory clauses, the fault must lie in the tolerance shown by public opinion. Not that public opinion approves these practices; on the contrary. But when it comes to fighting the opposite party, people perfectly honourable in private life shut their eyes, acquiesce in buying "floaters" as in one of those melancholy necessities with which "politics," as well as war, is fraught, but which must be faced if the battle is to be won. And it must be won, for if you are a "man," an American, you cannot let yourself be beaten. The opposite party resorts to bribery;

then why should not your own party, which is the good, the just one, also benefit by it? The elector who sells himself, including the well-to-do and pious farmer of New Hampshire, has still fewer scruples: he has been brought up by the Caucus and Machine system in the notion that "politics" is a "business" in which, as in any other business, some people buy commodities and others sell them; and why should he let people who will make money out of his vote have it for nothing?

Legitimate expenditure.

97. Even when there is no bribery, the election expenses are still very heavy, in spite of the Australian Ballot, which has curtailed them by introducing official voting-papers prepared by and at the cost of the State, of the city, etc. The legitimate heads of expenditure are numerous enough: the hire of halls, the payments made to speakers, to canvassers, to "workers" of every kind; the making up and distribution of "political literature"; advertising, postage, and telegrams; the distribution of campaign emblems and "buttons," uniforms, banners, and torches used in processions and parades; the conveyance of electors on the polling-day, etc. Where does the money come from? It is supplied by the candidates, by the office-holders, and by private donors. The candidates, who have, as a rule, already paid the party Organization a certain sum for their nomination, contribute their quota toward the election expenses. The presidential candidates themselves subscribe to the "campaign fund"; if they are not rich, they must, and this applies to all candidates, have rich relatives or friends ready to step into the breach and to loosen their purse-strings.

Sources of the campaign funds.

The office-holders, who are liable to the tribute of "assessments" for the benefit of the party, have been less squeezed since the law of 1883 has taken the Federal employees appointed by competitive examinations out of the clutches of the parties, and has forbidden all officers or employees of the United States to demand and to collect "political contributions" in the Federal departments and their branches. The law is sometimes infringed and often evaded. In the service of the States and the municipal service, the *personnel* of which is much more numerous, there is, with a few exceptions, no legal obstacle to the levy of the assessments, and no means of refusing them with impunity; and they are still demanded and paid.

The gifts of private individuals who are not candidates nor office-holders make up a very large proportion of the "campaign fund." In the great majority of cases they are a pure speculation, an investment of money which later on should yield a good return in favours. The representatives of the big industrial or financial concerns, corporations, or individual capitalists obtain by a heavy contribution to the "campaign funds" a sort of mortgage over the future administration or legislature. The money contributed, of course secretly, by the corporations at the presidential campaigns of 1896–1904 has supplied the campaign managers with an enormous corruption fund, which has been used accordingly. It is considered that in 1896 the Republican national chairman disposed of a campaign fund of seven million dollars, in 1900 of three millions and a half, in 1904 of three millions. The exposures made after the presidential election of 1904 have roused public opinion against

Contributions by corporations.

the contributions of the corporations. Some States, about a dozen, have enacted laws formally prohibiting them. But the best cure turned out to be the disclosure which public opinion has forced on the national committees: those latter have made public all the money contributions received by them during the campaign. Owing to that attitude of public opinion the last presidential campaign, of 1908, was conducted on a much higher plane than before. Whether that plane will be maintained in the future, when there will be more exciting campaigns with great issues, with great material interests, at stake, is an open question.

The corporations were not the only wealthy subscribers. Rich private individuals were in the habit of giving money with the same object, — to establish a claim on the gratitude of the future administration which would repay them with honours for themselves, such even as a seat in the Cabinet, or an embassy, or with places for their friends and their protégés. The publicity of campaign contributions is naturally a shock to such donors as well; but not so to another category of donors who subscribe out of pure "patriotism," pure devotion to the "cause," or who are actuated by sporting motives which make them enjoy a good fight for its own sake; they "plunge" for their party as they would for a race-horse.

The fund of party loyalty.

98. Still greater and more profitable than these funds subscribed by zealous partisans is the capital which consists of the feeling of loyalty to the party. Most of the electors are bound to one or other of the two great parties by various ties, the strongest of which are personal associations, the company which a man keeps,

tradition, habit, the prejudice created by these factors or engendered by considerations of private and public interest of a more or less rational or irrational kind. After all, the name of the party is its own justification in the eyes of millions of electors. They say, "I am a Democrat" or "I am a Republican," as the case may be, just as a believer says, to explain and justify his faith, "I am a Christian." The reader knows how, and through what political circumstances, party devotion, which is rather an unreasoning sentiment all the world over, has been intensified in the United States and raised to the level of a dogma, — the dogma of "regularity," which makes the party creed consist in voting the "straight party ticket," whatever it may be. The sins against the religion of the party are sins against the ticket. They fall under two heads, "scratching" and "bolting." A member of the party who withholds his vote from one or some of the candidates entered on the party ticket, while voting for the rest, is guilty of "scratching": he "scratches," he strikes out the names of the candidates to whom he objects. The elector who altogether rejects the ticket adopted by the Organization of his party commits the graver offence of "bolting"; his perversity makes him a "bolter," an apostate. Directly the candidates are proclaimed by the convention, their rivals and their opponents are bound to submit, to rally to them, and even to fight by their side and for them. This is called "falling into line." The humble party follower never has an opportunity of hearing the candidates on the ticket criticised by any one but open enemies belonging to the opposite party, who are of course the fathers of lies. He turns a deaf

ear to their perfidious remarks, he preserves his party immaculateness, without a single lapse, which enables him to say proudly: "I have never in my life scratched a ticket," even when the candidates on it were as bad as could be. The intensity of these feelings of party loyalty varies somewhat according to occasion and social environment. In the "presidential years," when the chief magistracy of the Republic has to be won, party loyalty will stop at no sacrifices and will swallow all scruples to attain its end. In order not to jeopardize the success of the ticket, which represents an indivisible whole, the faithful follower of the party will vote blindly for any one who comes after the presidential candidate; he will vote even for a "yellow dog." Hence, this exceptional year is often called, from that point of view, "the yellow dog year."

Variations in party loyalty.

As regards the intensity of party loyalty according to social environment, it is greater in the East and, in general, in the country districts. In the East, tradition, hereditary habits, are more powerful; social relations are more crystallized, so to speak; in short, the East is more conservative. Besides, party Organization, which keeps party loyalty alive like a fire, is more developed in the East than in the West. The mode of life in the country districts encourages mental stagnation in political matters as well as in other respects. The sources of information are indifferent; new ideas have difficulty in making their way. Social pressure, which is much heavier in the country than in the cities, and respect for the world's opinion mount guard around the old creed of the party: often it is only at the risk of losing the esteem and the confidence of your neighbours

that you can break with your political party. This state of the public mind, which, as it were, congeals the electoral masses, leads to the formation of "Republican States" and of "Democratic States," according as the traditional preponderance belongs to one or the other party, and gives these parties "normal majorities."

How party loyalty is impaired.

99. This is not, however, the case everywhere and always. Party loyalty, even without being affected by bribery, yields often to certain influences or considerations. It may happen that the candidate's personality prevails over the habits of the elector as a party-man; if he dislikes the candidate of his own party, he "scratches" his name on the list; he is attracted by the candidate of the opposite party, perhaps by a single candidate on a long list, and he votes for him. In local elections personal considerations carry very great weight, whereas in other elections the American elector is not so liable, at least was not so till very recently, to be carried away by them.

Party loyalty is far more seriously impaired by the trend of events, by new political or merely economic considerations which disturb the elector's peace of mind. He feels that he is threatened, or believes that the country is threatened, by what has already happened or is likely to happen, and in his fright he darts out of the beaten party track wherein he is wont to walk. The mirage of a universal prosperity to be brought about by some infallible specific, such as the unlimited issue of paper money or the free coinage of silver, is rushed madly after by masses of electors. It is, in fact, a sort of contagious madness; hence the term "craze" is applied to these electoral convulsions. Under the

pressure of circumstances of one kind or another, with or without good reason, the current of opinion turns towards a certain party, creates or develops for its benefit a "feeling" which mounts like a tidal wave, submerging everything that it meets. This analogy has led to the application of the expression "tidal wave" to the election which has given the winning side an overwhelming majority. Capricious and undefinable as the tidal wave is, its course is, to some extent, regulated by the communities through which it passes; at one time it is impetuous, at another it moves more slowly. The West is the region where it displays most force; the equality of social conditions which prevails in this vast tract of country allows the "feeling" to spread without hindrance from one person to another, like a prairie fire, whereas in the East it is interrupted, is stopped, by the barriers arising out of social divisions.

"Tidal wave."

As the Federal, State, and local elections are practically mixed up, and all the candidates of the party are brought together on a single ticket, the elector is generally inclined to vote for them in a lump, to put a "straight ticket" in the ballot-box. Special combinations of circumstances may, however, prompt him to divide his vote, by voting for the local candidates of one party and for the candidates for the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency of the Union nominated by the opposite party. An elector who is thus guilty of a partial infidelity to his party is said to vote a "split ticket." Splitting the ticket has already become more and more common in local elections, to the detriment of the party; the elector looks, more than formerly, to the personal merit of

"Straight ticket."

"Split ticket."

the municipal candidates, and not to their party label; and within these last years this attitude of the voter has spread to the State and even national elections. Independence from party has made remarkable progress, as we shall see later. Irrespective of the independent and critically minded electors, who are daily growing more numerous within the parties, there is a very considerable number of electors who are in a continuous state of oscillation, so to speak, drifting hither and thither with events. It is above all these voters who must be got hold of, it is at them that the whole activity of the party organizations is aimed: the meetings, the "documents," the processions and parades, the acts of pressure of every kind. The party which puts forth, in this direction, the greatest efforts and in the most methodical way, will have the best chance of winning, independently of the intrinsic merit of the cause or of the principles which this party represents, or of the force of time-honoured prejudices which protects it. From this point of view the fate of party contests, however deep the convictions or however ardent the passions to which they give rise, depends on organization.

Getting out the voters.

100. The success of the efforts made to "get out the vote," as the phrase goes, will, however, be incomplete if care is not taken, at the eleventh hour, to "get out" the voters. Apathy and want of public spirit are so great with many electors that they would abstain from voting if they were left to themselves on the polling-day, as is the case in England. Yet the American elector shows more eagerness to vote. The belief in the duty of voting is more common in the

United States, perhaps not so much from the fact that the civic conscience is more enlightened there, as owing to the civic "cant" which, to a certain extent, prevails in the American democracy. The excessive use of the elective system, which necessitates constant appeals to the electors, which demands unremitting exertions to win their good graces, has developed in American political life, to a greater degree than elsewhere, the verbiage about the greatness of the people, about the august majesty of the citizen, about his sacred rights and duties, etc. With these grand words constantly dinned into his head and with a genuine appreciation of them, the American elector, while wholly wrapped up in his affairs, readily cherishes a platonic cult for his civic duties. He considers that he owes it to himself to profess this cult, although he has not the time nor the inclination to be a minister of it; and he thinks he puts himself right with his conscience when he goes to deposit his voting-paper on the day of the poll, — the voting-paper prepared for him and without him, — as one goes to church on the day of a great festival. It is a testimonial of piety as well, of civic piety, which he delivers to himself; and, as he can get it cheap, he is quite ready to join in the ritual performance of the vote, which is the sum and substance of his civic religion. Again, nowhere is the elector so canvassed as he is by the party Organization in the United States. This twofold pressure put on the elector reaches its height in the presidential years. The result is that the vote yields at that time very high proportions — as much as 95 per cent of the total electorate. The maximum is reached in the "doubtful" States, where

the parties fight tooth and nail over the slender majority which may issue from the contest. It should be noted, however, that the total of 100 per cent represents only electors on the register, that is to say, under the American system, those only who have got on it of their own accord. A good many, in fact, abstain from registering.

Stay-at-home vote.

101. In many States the abstentions are considerable, and the "stay-at-home vote" or the "dumb vote" is pretty large, even at the presidential elections. Most of those abstaining do so from pure indifference; but with many others the dislike and weariness of politics are the true causes. Lastly, along with the incorrigible abstainers, there are electors, well-meaning citizens, who take temporary refuge in abstention to express their dissatisfaction with the conduct of their party. This mode of protesting by silence against abuses is not uncommon, and sometimes is a serious blow to those against whom it is directed.

Abstention from voting occurs with special frequency at elections other than those of the "presidential year"; at local elections it is considerable and sometimes even enormous. The cause of good government suffers much therefrom, for the result is that the mercenary elements of the Machines are the most regular in voting. In this connection the question of a compulsory vote has been raised. Before the foundation of the Republic, under English rule, there were in several colonies old laws which imposed fines on electors who abstained from voting.

The election campaign is virtually closed on the first Tuesday of November with the popular vote for

Conclusion of the campaign.

the members of the Electoral college who, according to the letter of the Constitution, will have to choose, a few months later, the President and the Vice-President of the Republic. The result of this vote discloses in advance the name of the future President, as the presidential electors are chosen, just like the other candidates, on the recommendation of the party Organization, only to put into the ballot-box the name of the presidential candidate adopted by the national convention of the party. Although the law leaves them full liberty of action, there is no instance of the presidential electors having voted contrary to the instructions of their party.

The vote once recorded, the rôle of the people is completed as well. Lord and sovereign judge, they have appeared on the scene at the last moment only, having come from afar, as it were from a foreign land or from the opposite bank. No sooner have they come out than the politicians surround and turn the mass of electors by a series of concerted movements, and strive to conquer their minds and lead their wills captive. The efforts expended are formidable and the apparent results are admirable, but it is the triumph of organization turning factory methods to action on the public mind. In the endeavour to mould the human material with the minimum of friction and resistance, all efforts are concentrated on its most malleable points; the living mass is hammered in its most impressionable spot — the senses. The emotions of the multitude are appealed to; it is excited and worked up into a state of hysteria by a set of elaborate methods. The extreme nervous tension produced in the electors is inevitably

followed by a reaction. The artificial passion for the public weal at once gives way to civic weariness. Exhausted, the great mass of the electorate falls or relapses into a state of prostration. The "politicians" alone are left standing and masters of the field.

ELEVENTH CHAPTER

THE POLITICIANS AND THE MACHINE

Genesis of the politician.

102. On the great stage of electoral life which we have just quitted, we have repeatedly caught glimpses of the professional politicians pulling the wires. To grasp their action with its causes and effects, we must go behind the scenes, catch them in their own haunts, and make them, as it were, sit to us for their portraits.

The American politician, while constituting a separate class in American society, has not a distinct origin. He is recruited from all ranks of the community, as circumstances and personal tastes happen to dictate, by a process of *natural selection*. The germ which produces the politician is the desire to obtain some public office or other, or, somewhat less frequently, to exert influence and power. Many simply like the "game." Aspirants of these last categories may be sometimes men of good standing. But usually the aspiring politician is much more likely to be a low-class attorney, a small employee, or even an artisan, a car-conductor, down to a *déclassé*, a social failure. To realize his ambition, he begins to "study politics." It is not the "Politics" of Aristotle, nor even that of Columbia College, but it is none the less a science which demands great application and certain natural aptitudes. It

consists of a technical part, which includes a knowledge of the machinery of the party organization, with all its wheels within wheels, — the primaries, the committees, the various sets of conventions, — and of the legal procedure in force for making up the register and taking the vote. While learning the ostensible working of the party and of the election machinery, the future politician fathoms their inner working, the manœuvres, the dodges, and the frauds by means of which a minority, perhaps an insignificant minority, is transformed into a majority, and a semblance of popular sanction is given to the schemes of a gang of political sharpers. But all these highly useful acquirements constitute, so to speak, only the mechanical side of the politician's art, which by itself will not carry its man very far.

Getting a following.

The principal subject-matter of his "studies" is a sort of empirical psychology. He studies the men about him and their weak points, and by trading on the latter he tries to get as large a following as possible. He begins with his immediate neighbours, who live on the same landing; he extends his advances to the inmates of the whole house, and before long to the house next door or the next two houses. When he has got acquainted with a dozen, or even half a dozen, electors, who are ready, often out of mere friendship, to join him at the elections, he is the possessor of a small political capital, which he will forthwith turn over, and which will become, perhaps, the foundation of his success. It is like the future millionaire's first fifty-dollar note. "Owning" half a dozen or a dozen votes, he is received with open arms by the local organization of the party. His career of "ward politician" has begun.

In the popular wards of the large cities the small politician has no need to create the political following which he forms around him; he finds it ready to hand in social life, in which neighbourly ties, and above all common tastes and mutual sympathies, give rise to small sets, groups of people who meet regularly to enjoy the pleasures of sociability and of friendship, at the street corner, as long as they are in the youthful stage, then in a drinking-saloon. These "gangs" are a latent political force; when the elections come round they may furnish compact bands of voters. The small politician therefore has but to lay his hand on them. Often he has himself grown up in the gang and with it; he frequently had the opportunity of displaying his superior faculties of command and of organization; his companions got into the habit of following him in everything. The agglomerations of European immigrants offer a no less favourable soil for the growth of the political manipulator of men. Germans, Italians, or Slavs arrive without knowing the language, the manners and customs, and the institutions of the country. But thereupon they find a fellow-countryman already naturalized and at home in the New World, who puts himself fraternally at their disposal; he guides their early steps, he helps them to look out for work, he appears on their behalf before the public authorities; later on, when the legal term has expired, or even earlier, he procures their naturalization. Full of gratitude for his friendly services, and of admiration for his intelligence, they make over to him with perfect good faith the votes which have just been given them, and which as a rule they do not know what to do with.

Here again is an "owner" of votes, who will find a good investment for his modest pile in the electoral market.

The politician gets into the Organization;

103. When the influence of the budding politician asserts itself in the precinct, the Organization of the party formally invests him with the position of local leader. He becomes its official representative in the precinct (often known by the name of "captain"), and acquires an indefeasible right to a share of the profits realized by the Organization, that is, to some office suited rather to his merits as a wire-puller than to his special fitness for it. Often within the ranks of the party the budding politician meets with rivals and competitors; each has his knot of followers, and each seeks to extend his influence. The one who is most skilful in managing his fellow-creatures, who best appraises each man's price, who is clever in bringing about understandings and alliances, will come out first and will transform his rivals into his trusty lieutenants. They will bind themselves to his car in order to get a part of the booty, a smaller one, but a more certain. The immediate object and, to a certain extent, the arena of this "struggle for existence" is the local primary; each strives to assert himself in the primary, that is to say, to procure the election of delegates devoted to him. The competitor who succeeds in this, by whatever means, will be "recognized" by the higher Organization of the party impassively contemplating the struggle.

improves his position.

In the larger arena of the ward or of the district, our small politician meets with other politicians of the same rank, and there exactly the same process of

natural selection takes place, one of them achieves the position of "leader," gains an ascendency over all the "ward politicians." A few of the cleverest leaders unite and form a "ring" or a "combine," to work up the electoral raw material and exploit "what there is in it." The organization of the politicians reaches the final stage of its development when the "leaders" find their master in one of their own number who commands obedience by his strength of will, his cleverness, his audacity, and his luck, and who asserts himself *per fas et nefas* in the central conventions of the party, just as his prototype, the "ward politician," asserts himself in the primary. By a tacit agreement every one wheels into line behind this man, recognizes him as the supreme chief. He is crowned city boss or State boss, as the case may be. At the head of his adherents, he forms with them what is called the "Machine," that is to say an aggregation of individuals stretching out hierarchically from top to bottom, bound to one another by personal devotion, but mercenary, and bent solely on satisfying their appetites by exploiting the resources of a political party. The men of the "Machine" do not accept this nickname, and style themselves "the Organization," usurping the name after having usurped the thing, after having "captured" the party Organization by a series of successful operations in the primaries and the conventions. This distinction between the Machine and the Organization often does exist: the Organization, even when "playing the game," required by the manipulation of a vast electorate, has its heart set on the interests of the party, while the Machine men look out only for themselves.

Forming of a "Machine."

Then the Machine, although a constant, is far from being a general phenomenon. For sake of clearness in this narrative, I shall refer in the meanwhile to the Machine as if it covered the whole political area of the United States.

Sometimes an ambitious and specially gifted politician quickens or anticipates the process of natural evolution, he "builds a machine" from top to bottom; he finds out men capable of serving him as lieutenants, and by his manœuvres spreads his net over the whole city or the whole State. But if he succeeds in this, it is because the social and political elements of the Machine were there ready to hand. Only one must know how to bring them together and keep them together. The strongest attraction and source of cohesion for the politicians are the public offices. Yet most of the Machine men are paid not so much in ready money as in drafts on the future; they are a singularly confiding race, and the hopes which are held out to them suffice to keep their zeal alive for a very long time. The material profits which the politicians receive or expect for their services are seasoned with the social pleasures which they enjoy in the gatherings of their particular circle.

Hierarchy of the Machine:

104. All the men of the Machine may be divided into three categories representing three distinct grades: the "boys," the "henchmen," and the "bosses." The boys are the simple workers who do the rough work, very often the dirty work of politics. They are the

Boys,

chief performers in the primaries: they are always there in force, to support the leaders with their lungs, and if need be with their fists; they make themselves

the docile instrument of the frauds and manœuvres conceived by the ingenious brain of the managing ring; they supply the *claque* at the meetings; they do duty in the processions and at the parades; they go the round of the drinking-saloons to pick up the voters; they fetch them at their residences; and generally they are always at the heels of the leaders, which has got them the nickname of "heelers." Ignorant, brutal, averse to regular work, the heelers are mostly recruited in the "dangerous" classes, criminal or semi-criminal, from among frequenters of drinking-saloons, from failures and loafers of every description.

henchmen, and bosses.

The henchmen are the lieutenants and helps of the bosses; they vary in social position and rank with the position of their masters, from the associate of the small local leader up to the confidential man of the great boss who sits in the Senate of the United States. The henchman is a sort of prefect or vicar who "works" for the boss, who manages the subordinate politicians and the electorate on his behalf. He is personally responsible to the boss for the success of his operations: if he betrays want of zeal or skill he is summarily dismissed; as soon as a man is considered not sufficiently useful to the Machine he is thrown over without pity. Apart from political service the henchman owes the boss personal homage, just as his historical prototype, the vassal, owed it to the lord. He cherishes for the boss a devotion into which affection scarcely enters, but which is a mixture of the obedience of a subordinate and of sincere admiration for the doughty chief. He sees in him the living embodiment of the virtues and of the ideal of the "politician," which invest the latter

with just as bright a halo in the eyes of men who have risen in the primaries as that which encircled the mediæval knight. Many a boss keeps his henchmen at a distance, — it is only with feelings and gestures of deference that they approach him; others indulge in more familiarity with their lieutenants, but the subordination always exists and often goes as far as servility, of a kind to which a hired domestic would object.

The boss in his turn owes help and protection to his henchmen: he must defend them with his person, must forward their political ambitions, if they have any, ensure them a livelihood if they are not well off, as is the case with most of his lieutenants, procure them places in the public service, and keep them there, however great their incompetence or neglect of their duties. He will move heaven and earth to place his men, he will risk his influence to achieve it. This is the first reward which he claims, regardless of himself, from the boss above him, or from the head of the executive power who makes appointments. He will besiege the new President, and, like the office-seekers under the first Harrison, will be ready to sleep in the corridors of the White House to be the first to catch the President when he wakes: he must have a place for his henchman. If the boss is a member of the Senate he will not hesitate, in order to put pressure on the administration, to obstruct an important measure demanded by the country: he must have a place for his henchman. It is by no means out of chivalry that the boss thus devotes himself to his lieutenants; if he did not exert himself actively on their behalf, no one

would care to "work" for such a chief; or, if with all his goodwill he were to become unable to get places for his men, he would meet the same fate: his prestige vanished into thin air, and the boss would cease to be a boss.

Discipline in the Machine.

But as long as the ties which unite them to one another subsist, their mutual relations are ruled by an iron discipline. A subordinate politician must put his personal feelings completely on one side; his likes and dislikes are to order; he must be ready to exchange them one for the other without a moment's hesitation. The principal lieutenants themselves only wait for the word of command; even when the boss consults them, they are under no illusion as to their authority: he is free to listen to their advice or not, as soon as he has given his decision not a word is spoken. The committees of the party Organization, the ward, city, State committees, simply register the will of the boss or of the respective leader, and their members are in reality only figure-heads. The great boss, the city or State boss, generally presides over the central committee, but sometimes he puts in a lay-figure as his substitute. Although without any real influence, the committees can depose the bosses, by electing another chairman of the committee in place of the boss or of his lay-figure. This is the formal proclamation of the deposition of the reigning boss to whom his vassals renounce allegiance.

The "leader."

105. The Machine is now built, the politicians are sorted and in their proper places for action. Our next step is to see them at work. For this purpose we shall begin by following a politician of average importance

whose intermediary position places him at the centre of action, such as a sub-boss in a large city, a "district leader" or a "ward leader." This "leader" presents himself to us in the first instance as the engineer-in-chief of the Machine for getting hold of the base of operations of organized parties — the nominations for elective posts. Forestalling the rôle of the primaries and the conventions, the Machine, as we know already, makes up the slate of delegates and of candidates and gets it simply registered by these party assemblies.

"Deliverer of delegates."

Having selected his candidates, the boss instructs the "leader" to "deliver a solid delegation" for these candidates, and the leader is bound to "deliver the goods." If the leader is unable to do so, he signs his deposition as leader. On the other hand, if the lieutenants of a boss, small or great, refuse to "deliver the goods" to him, the boss will not have the wherewithal for carrying on his trade in elective offices. The internal operations of the Machine along the whole line consist, therefore, of these deliveries: each respective leader is supposed to "deliver the delegates" to his superior, from the delegates to the county or district convention up to the delegates to the National Convention. The district leader is the first deliverer. How does he get the "goods" himself? After the delivery of the delegates, the electors must be made to vote for the candidates adopted by those delegates. The district leader again is the chief agent of this operation. How does he succeed in it?

In both cases he gains his end by corruption and by seduction. The sinews of corruption are supplied him by the Machine; the means of seduction he

derives from his own resources. He is amiable with everybody, with the lowest of the low; he is all things to all men. To offend no one, to please every one, that is his motto. He is in constant touch with all the electors of his district, he knows their ins and outs, the strong and the weak points of each man, and how to exploit them. He "understands" all his people perfectly, because he is one of them himself; if the district is one which swarms with the dregs of the population, with frequenters of drinking-saloons, the local leader of the Machine is not much superior; on the other hand, in a better-class district the leader always has a respectable appearance, he speaks English correctly, he is pleasing, and genial without being vulgar. With these apparent virtues he combines certain moral virtues, a very small stock it is true, but enough to ensure him esteem and general confidence: he is a man of courage, of strength of will, and above all, a man of his word. No matter if he is a low wire-puller, who sticks at no fraud, or if he has committed breaches of trust in public offices, — he keeps his promises, he is a man of honour. This merit is appreciated in him to the exclusion of all the others because everybody or nearly everybody has something to ask of him.

Dispenser of offices

106. All aspirants to public office who inhabit "his" district apply to him, from members of the bar who want a judgeship down to crossing-sweepers. In that district he is the sole dispenser of all the public posts at the disposal of the party Organization. This "patronage" entrusted to the leader is not limited to the elective offices. To obtain one of the non-elective

posts in the public departments, down to those of office messengers, invariably given by favour, you must have what is called a "pull," or "pulls." The public servant who owes his place to the party Organization, contracts obligations toward it: the representative of the Organization, the leader of the Machine, has a "pull" on him. If the innumerable places in the public service are not sufficient, the leader is in a position to get his people small places in railroads, in street-cars, and other large private concerns: the companies, as we are aware, have need of "protection," and being anxious to stand well with the all-powerful party Organization, they always give a good reception to the applications or recommendations of the leader of the Machine: he has a "pull" on these great employers of labour.

and favours.

In addition to positions, there are a thousand and one favours which the representative of the Machine can grant by means of his influence, favours which imply the weal or woe of the whole existence of many humble folk: permits issued by the police or by other authorities for plying some small trade or business on the public thoroughfare, such as that of costermonger, of boot-black, of seller of cooling drinks, etc.; a word from the leader of the Machine is enough to get the poor fellow permission to set up his improvised shop at a street-corner. It is through the leader again that one can obtain a license to open a drinking-saloon or get it refused to a competitor. The power of his pulls extends even to defying the law itself; it ensures impunity to misdemeanours, nay even to criminal offences. If the culprits are trusty followers

of the Machine, the policemen will often think twice about arresting them. When they are arrested, the leader intervenes and applies for their release on bail. He provides the sum fixed by the judge as bail, and then, before the hearing comes on, tries to get the judge to dismiss the case, or at all events to obtain a considerable reduction or a commutation of the penalty. If the matter is a more serious one and comes within the province of the prosecuting officers, the Machine exerts its influence with them to get the prosecution dropped. The Machine has a "pull" on them as it has on all the elective officials. If the prosecution cannot be stopped, it can be spun out and the decision postponed. Whatever the gravity of the case therefore, as soon as there is any "trouble," everybody rushes off to the leader of the Machine. He is an inverted tribune of the people, he defends the obscure and the humble against justice, he interposes between them and the arm of the law.

Inverted tribune of the people.

Many other citizens who have nothing to ask or fear from the public authorities, but who are in needy circumstances, also get help and succour from the representative of the Machine: to this one he lends a dollar; for another he obtains a railroad ticket without payment; he has coal distributed in the depth of winter; he sometimes sends poultry at Christmas time; he buys medicine for a sick person; he helps to bury the dead by procuring a coffin on credit or at half price. He dispenses an ample hospitality in the drinking-saloons; as soon as he comes in, friends known and unknown gather round him, and he treats everybody, he orders one drink after another for the company; he is the

Poor men's friend.

only one who does not drink, he is on duty. The electors who are below the favours or the civilities of the representatives of the Machine are bought right out at the market price. Each man is taken at his weak point. It is like a huge spider's web spread by the Machine over the district. Every new elector is drawn into it at once. As soon as he moves into the locality an enquiry is made about him of the representatives of the Machine in whose jurisdiction his old residence was situated, a visit is paid him, an attempt is made to win him. An answer is found in his case to the invariable question which haunts the Machine: what does he want, what would he like to have? The man who does not wish for anything, who does not ask for anything, is the most painful puzzle to the Machine; it considers him almost as a hateable being.

"Punishments" of opponents.

107. The favours of every kind granted to those who go with the Machine, the "rewards," find a corollary in the "punishments" inflicted on those who cross its path. It deprives them of their livelihood, it persecutes and molests them with all the resources of its influence. If the man who has incurred its animosity is an employee, it gets him dismissed from his situation; if he is engaged in manufactures or trade, the leader sets on him the police to make a point of worrying him on the most futile or imaginary pretexts; at one time the sanitary conditions of his establishment are defective, at another the carriages or vans which stand outside his door impede the traffic. The tax collector makes a minute investigation into the taxes and licenses paid by the trader who is in the bad books of the Machine, and discovers that he has not been

paying the proper sum. The saloon-keeper who remained open after the statutory hour at night and on Sundays, with the countenance of the police, is prosecuted and fined heavily as soon as he has lost the favour of the Machine. The wretched peddler at the street-corner does not escape the vengeance of the Machine any more than the millionaires; his permit is withdrawn. To vindicate its slighted authority, the Machine makes use of everything, even of corpses, as in the case of Tammany, which, in order to give a too independent undertaker a lesson, instructed the municipal employees at its beck and call to put him on short commons, to send him only one dead body a month.

Alliance with lowest class influences.

While bringing their efforts to bear on individual electors, the leaders of the Machine also make great exertions to cultivate the friendship of men who through their position or their business can procure them adhesions in a lump, who can serve as recruiting sergeants. For this purpose they make friends in the workmen's trade unions, in the factories and the workshops, and even descend to the lowest step in the social ladder to get useful help; they get hold of the keepers of lodging-houses, of gambling-houses, and of every kind of den frequented by the criminal or semi-criminal class, of the saloon-keepers, by ensuring them protection against the police and the law, or by paying them directly. The co-operation of the saloon-keepers is particularly appreciated, and very often the Machine takes them into partnership, and confers on one of them the post of "captain" of the precinct in which his saloon is situated. The saloon-keepers do not always confine themselves to the rôle of humble auxiliaries of the Machine; their

influence develops their ambitions and appetites, and sometimes gives them access to municipal councils, and even to State legislatures, where they look after the interests of their trade, and prostitute their official position to every form of corruption.

Such is the leader and his methods in the popular precincts, in the "down-town" districts. In the "up-town" districts, inhabited by people in better circumstance and of greater intelligence, the leader himself and the voters are above those methods. The leader in such districts is usually a decent enough man. He may have gone into politics for love of the sport or from ambition. Not unfrequently he is less disinterested, he wants to improve his position, in his profession or in his business. He, too, is "playing the game," he is dispensing offices and favours, he is bent on inveigling the voters, but his endeavours do not display the ugly features of the leader working in the slums.

Strategy tried on the respectable voters.

108. The operations of the "leaders," which bear on the lower strata of the population, may suffice to "fix the primaries," to form the conventions of delegates to the Machine's liking, and to bring the big battalions up to the poll. But there is the respectable portion of the electorate which can assert itself at the election day and reject the candidates of the Machine, who are usually the reverse of being the worthiest men. These latter could not serve the Machine. To thrust the Machine candidates on the bulk of the party, there is often required a higher strategy and a special sort of tactics which test the sagacity of the heads of the Machine themselves, of the boss, or of the managing ring. The A B C of the strategy of the Machine is to shuffle

the electoral pack. At the municipal election the issue is never the good government of the city, the state of the pavements or the drainage, but the Protectionist tariff, or Cuba, or the Philippines. Why, this particular city election will predetermine the result of the impending State election, or even of the presidential election — is this the time to look closely into the merit of this or that local candidate? The Machine includes men whose political morality provokes strong animadversions; it has governed the city or the State like a satrapy. There is, perhaps, an element of truth in this charge; but is it fair to make the party pay for the individual faults of a few of its servants? The enemy is at the gates, and it is the "life of the party," of that grand, that noble party, which must be saved; who will lift a parricidal hand against it? Sometimes the stake is still higher; the party which the Machine claims to serve is identified with a problem which closely concerns the daily existence of the great majority of the citizens, such as the protection of the national industries or the currency. The defeat of the party means financial ruin followed by the advent of anarchy and socialism; under such circumstances what do men signify? it is the flag which must be followed. And each time the issue is an exceptional one, which makes it imperative to vote the party ticket as it stands, to vote even for a "yellow dog."

Confusion of the issues.

This card-shuffling game is very often complicated by the fact that the Machine slips spurious cards into the pack; it puts forward perfectly respectable men whose reputation and social position appear to preclude the idea that they would make themselves liege-

men of the Machine; but owing to their weakness of character and want of perspicacity they become, without being aware of it, tools in the hands of the astute leaders of the Machine; they do what the Machine wants, and shield it with their respectability. These ornamental candidates are known by the name of "figure-heads." The figure-head is almost a classic character, he is to be found at every stage of political life directed by the party Organization: in the nominating conventions, especially in the State conventions, in the important elective offices, such as that of mayor, sometimes in the post of State Governor, and much more rarely in Congress. Another species of candidate with which the Machine hoodwinks the electors consists of "dummies," imaginary candidates. Thus the Machine, fearing that its real candidate whom it has in its mind may be rejected by the electors on account of his disreputableness, puts forward another candidate ten times more disreputable. This odious candidature provokes a revolt of the public conscience. Bowing to public opinion, the Machine humbly gives way and withdraws its man, substituting for him the other whom it had selected *in petto*. The public thereupon accepts this latter as the lesser of the two evils with a veritable sense of relief, and congratulates itself on the fresh proof which it has just given of the omnipotence of free opinion in a democracy, the mere manifestation of which is sufficient to make the political bandits hide their heads. The superlatively odious candidate who has voluntarily retired is a dummy.

Figure-heads.

Dummies.

109. It is not uncommon for the part of dummy to be played by the Machine of the opposite party.

If this latter is not strong enough to carry its own ticket, it prefers to come to terms with its rival, to help it to elect its candidates, in order to get a share of the spoils as its reward. With this object it makes weak nominations, it chooses for the party which it represents candidates likely rather to repel than attract the electors; it dooms them to failure beforehand, in order to ensure the success of the supposedly hostile Machine. These Machiavellian combinations are, however, only some of the forms assumed by the co-operation of hostile Machines which, instead of fighting each other, often find it more profitable to come to terms, and to make "deals." They "trade" the votes of the electors; the Democratic Machine gives its votes to the Republican candidate for the post of Governor, in return for which the Republican Machine helps to carry the Democratic ticket at the city elections. When a formidable movement of independent electors, of "reformers," breaks out, an understanding between the two Machines often seems to them the obvious course — to save the Machine régime, the spoils system which supports the politicians.

Collusion of the rival Machines.

"Deals."

When the independents of its own party become a danger, the Machine resorts to the "harmony" dodge: it makes fervent appeals to them in favour of concord, is lavish of promises of good government, subscribes to everything proposed in the way of declarations of principles, of programmes, provided that it is allowed to have the candidates. At a pinch, it allows the recalcitrants a portion of the ticket; it flings the Cerberus of public opinion a few elective posts bestowed on highly respectable persons; if possible, it selects them from the class of figure-heads, otherwise it acquiesces in

Pacifying the independents.

the complete abandonment of these offices. If the brute is savage and has sharp teeth, the Machine throws it a few more sops. If public opinion declares with special force in favour of a certain candidature, the Machine hastens to adopt it. The flexibility with which the Machine tries to adapt itself to circumstances has no limits; it is capable, in order to mislead public opinion, of changing its skin, of becoming quite "respectable," and of appearing exclusively taken up with the public weal, of even hoisting the standard of "reform," of starting on a crusade against the corruption of the politicians, especially when that corruption is embodied in the Machine of the opposite party. All this lasts just so long as is required for the storm to blow over; when the popular effervescence has subsided, the Machine will revert to its old ways. Except in periods of crisis, it cares little for what honest folk think of its deeds or misdeeds; it reckons on the indifference and the apathy of the great mass of the electors. Experience but rarely contradicts it; in quiet times it can manipulate the candidatures as it likes, and that is enough to make it master of the position. The whole business of hoodwinking public opinion, to which the Machine devotes itself, is powerfully seconded by the party Press.

Absolute power of the Machine over candidates;

110. Being aware of the fact that the Machine holds the keys of the electoral situation, everybody whose interests are affected thereby acknowledges its power, whether they like it or not. The candidates of the party are the first to realize that they are not at liberty to attain their object independently of the Machine, and still less in opposition to it. With the great majority of candidates, the enormous election expenses and the technical

complexity of the election business are quite enough to prevent them from courting the popular suffrages with their own resources; if an aspirant is not approved by the Machine of the party to which he claims to belong, he must construct a Machine for himself, — like a traveller who would build a railroad for his own use. Aided by the conditions with which we are familiar, the Machine has succeeded in transforming the elections into an industry, exploited like other industrial concerns, on the method of concentration of capital and labour applied to the raw material. Being able to deliver its product on the most favourable terms, it takes orders, it contracts for elections: does any one wish to become municipal councillor or member of the legislature, he has but to come to terms with the Machine, to "see" the boss and settle the price; the Machine undertakes the rest. As it enjoys a monopoly in its line of business, the Machine can refuse offers without giving any reason, that is to say, forbid an aspirant to become a candidate. Again, the tradition of local candidatures which excludes candidates not residing in the constituency prevents the aspirant shown out by the boss from trying his political luck in another constituency. The boss has thus absolute power over the candidates, he can admit them into or shut them out of political life at will.

over executive officers;

After having got into office they are still under the Machine's thumb: every public official must put all his influence at its disposal, that which his office procures him as well as his own. The Executive, and in general the officials who are at the head of a department, are the first prey of the Machine, for they

dispose of what the Machine wants above all things, — the subordinate offices in the public administration with which it pays its henchmen and its workers. The departmental chiefs make over to it the patronage which is entrusted to them by law. The municipal Machine claims it from the mayor; the State Machine gets the State offices from the Governor; the State boss extorts the nominations to the Federal places of his State from the President of the United States. And each of them yields usually to the exigencies and entreaties of the particular Machine, for the same reasons as in the case of the President have already been disclosed in the historical sketch of the system of party organization. These reasons apply with still greater force to the lower officials. Here, for instance, is a local official of as high a rank as State Governor; he is not in needy circumstances, he is sometimes very rich, a millionaire; but his political future depends entirely on the Machine, it is the Machine which has taken him out of obscurity, and if it drops him he will fall back into it; yet he has further ambitions, he would like to become Senator of the United States, or he even dreams of the White House. The men of the Machine are always at him, and weak character as he generally is, he soon yields, though a man of good intentions. At the best, oscillating between fear of public opinion and fear of the Machine, he will wear himself out in concessions, now to one and now to the other. It is not only the patronage that the Governor exercises in the Machine's favour, under its pressure. Wherever the boss "owns" the Governor, as the saying goes, he makes him veto the decisions of the legislature which thwart the Machine, makes him

pardon the electoral tricksters or the unfaithful officials belonging to the Machine, who happened to have been convicted.

These latest years, however, have witnessed a greater independence of State Governors and other high officials from the Machine. Many of them on entering office consider it necessary to reassure public opinion by declaring their independence of bosses and party organizations. Some of them are even waging war on the Machines.

over the legislative assemblies;

III. The legislative power, too, is prone to fall into the clutches of the Machines, especially the State legislatures and the municipal assemblies. In each legislative assembly the Machine "owns" a certain number of members whose election expenses it has paid; these tools of the Machine form a nucleus which is quickly developed by intimidation and corruption brought to bear on the independent members. In a later chapter we shall see how the Organization men, wielding the scourge of party discipline within the Assembly through the legislative caucus, make themselves the masters of the House. Even uncompromising members are brought to their knees by the risk of their bills, in which their constituents are particularly interested, being thwarted. Some members sell themselves; others, and they are more numerous, honest men, generally from the country districts, succumb to the schemes of the agents of corruption who set traps for them, entice them into bad courses, lead them into gambling, etc. The Speaker of the Assembly, who is not only a moderator but exerts tremendous influence on legislation, is a creature of the Machine, chosen at its behests. In the

last analysis the Machine is the master of the Legislature. The "power behind the throne greater than the throne" ceases even to be a figure of speech, it may become a material reality as in the Legislature of Missouri, where the boss used to sit behind a curtain at the back of the Chair and send his orders or amendments to bills. The legislation which the Machine demands or extorts from the State assemblies is very varied: sometimes it is the creation of new offices to be distributed among the politicians; fiscal and other favours to the companies which are its financial backers; the reduction of their taxes; the creation of monopolies in favour of private individuals.

The Machine interferes in a similar way with municipal government, which is even the principal sphere of its activity and evil deeds, as we are already aware from the historical sketch of the caucus system. It is more easy to "build a Machine" in a city than in a State: the spoil awaits, so to speak, the bosses and the plundering rings — contracts to be adjudged, public works to be given out, "franchises" to be granted, and sinecures to be created in the municipal departments, or rather on the pay-rolls. And if the Machine is brought to perfection, the municipal councils are not less responsive to the bosses than the State assemblies. A well-known writer who investigated a boss-ridden city remarked sarcastically to the boss: "Of course, you have a mayor, and a council and judges?" — "Yes, but I have a telephone too," answered the boss.

over the judiciary.

The administration of justice itself does not escape the influence of the Machine, for the judges, being elective officials, are, like the others, in need of being put

on the slate. The subordinate magistrates, the police justices, taken very often from among the "henchmen" of the Machine, are generally its humble servants. They help the Machine to control the lower strata of the electors, their duties making them the nearest and the most influential public authority, next to the police, with the masses. Of the higher magistrates the Machine wields the most pernicious influence over the prosecuting officers, by making them, as has already been mentioned, dismiss or suspend prosecutions against its protégés. The higher judiciary, chosen with more regard for the importance of their office, discharge their duties fairly honourably so long as "politics" are not involved; but whenever the interests of the party and of its Machine are at stake they are liable to be influenced by party considerations. The boss can make them atone for their independence; a frown from the boss is enough to put an end to the most brilliant and most dignified judicial career; having got the judge elected the Machine considers it has "the right," as the Tammany boss put it recently, "to expect proper consideration at his hands."

Thus there is no sphere of public, political, and economic activity into which the Machine does not penetrate, in which it does not wield an influence used solely for its own interests. A detailed analysis of the resources supplied by each of these spheres to the operations and the schemes of a Machine, in a large city or in a State, would present a really formidable whole, transcending in importance all that a legitimate government, however vast its powers, can aspire to.

TWELFTH CHAPTER

THE POLITICIANS AND THE MACHINE (*conclusion*)

The boss.

112. THE extraordinary powers, unparalleled under the régime of free institutions, which the Machine exercises, centre eventually in a single man — the boss. What sort of man, then, is this, who is able to wield such an authority? Let us look more closely at the personage who is the embodiment of the politicians and their works.

Two principal species may be pointed out in the genus boss: the city boss and the State boss. The type is exactly the same, only the features differ: coarser in the one, they are often more refined in the other. The origin of the boss is always very humble, especially that of the city boss. This latter is a "self-made" man in the strict sense of the word. In the majority of cases, of foreign, very likely Irish, extraction, the child of parents who have recently immigrated, or having himself landed on American soil at a very early age, he has begun his public career in the streets of a large city as newspaper seller, street-car conductor, actor in a travelling circus, or, better still, waiter to a saloon-keeper, Irish like himself. There he was initiated into the mysteries of "paltics" by the conversations of the heelers and the ward politicians; he learnt to fathom the recesses of the human heart, disclosed by the gen-

His career.

erous properties of drink; and, having felt his vocation, he enlisted in the army of heelers, with the baton of boss in his knapsack. From a "repeater" (a man who votes several times over under feigned names) he quickly became head of a gang of repeaters, and then precinct leader. In the meanwhile he has, perhaps, mounted still higher on the politico-social ladder by becoming himself a saloon-keeper. Or, less fortunate, he has found his means of subsistence and his social position in a sinecure which the Machine has procured for him in the municipal administration.

Extending his influence from day to day, he constructed a small local machine; with its aid he became a member of the city council, that promised land flowing with milk and honey in the form of contracts for public works or even of "franchises," of the monopolies coveted by wealthy corporations. As district leader, he swallowed up the other less able district leaders and was left without a rival. A vulgar demagogue, he got the mob on his side, and, by dealing in its votes, he became the Cæsar of the Machine and of the city. This stirring and laborious career has sometimes been within an ace of being stopped by still more dramatic incidents, such as a criminal prosecution for homicide or less serious encounters with the law. However, he will perhaps have lost nothing by waiting; as it were by chance, justice may suddenly wake up, and, like his illustrious ancestor, Tweed, he may some day forget the cares of power in the peaceful retirement of a prison.

The State boss is generally of American origin. He has had a more respectable career, although in certain cases his past would not bear closely looking into.

Having entered "politics" young, the future State boss has built up his fortune slowly, by the same methods as the lower boss. Working as underling for a big boss, doing his jobs in every part of the State, he has made friends with the local politicians, he has found out their strong and their weak points, and has discerned the use which he can make of each man. With the most powerful of them he has concluded offensive and defensive alliances. Strengthened by these friendships and these supports, extending over the whole State, some wholly interested, others not unmixed with personal affection, he has got himself accepted as dispenser of Federal patronage, and, after a series of lucky operations with this capital, has ended by sweeping the whole State into the sphere of his influence.

Psychology of the boss.

113. This brilliant career of a man who from such a humble start has risen to be master of the government of a large city or of a State, — without, as a rule, filling any official position, — is, from one end to the other, the triumph of one supreme quality: skill in the management of men. With an inevitably limited stock of good things to be provided for an unlimited number of appetites, he performs the miracle of the loaves and fishes, discerning exactly the right slice and cutting off just the proper quantity to be given to each man. To some he offers the solid food of places, of money, and of pulls; to others the unsubstantial diet of promises. He plays with wants and appetites, with credulity and vanity, as with so many counters. He is admirably equipped for this game by his mind, which is profoundly calculating, cool, incapable of yielding to the impulse of the moment, but very capable of taking sudden and bold resolu-

tions to meet the situation. With this uniform type of mind, which is the distinctive mark of the species, the particular temperaments vary; there is the brutal, coarse, overbearing boss; the amiable and even seductive, or "magnetic" boss. But the affability never goes so far as expansiveness: the boss is naturally reserved, coiled up.

This Moltke of the Machine has all the less difficulty in being taciturn that he does not know the six languages in which the great German chief of the staff was silent; the boss often does not even know his own, he cannot speak or write English correctly. In fact, the education which the boss has received is generally of the poorest; he has hardly attended the primary school. Yet owing to the resourceful intelligence and the dogged energy which distinguish the American, many a boss, and especially those who have risen to the position of State boss, ends by acquiring a certain polish which shows itself not only in his dress and his manners, but appears to fill the gaps of his early very defective education.

Cultivated or without culture, the boss is, in any event, a man of superior intelligence, but of an altogether special kind of superiority, which shows itself in a very delicate appreciation of particular situations. He is incapable of grasping principles; his ideas in politics are hard to discover: he has none, and does not need them. That is not the compass he uses; it is the wind of circumstance and of personal issues which steers the course of the boss. He is incapable of stating his views on the problems of the day. He is neither a writer, nor a speaker, nor even a good talker; on the stump he would cut a poor figure. The few orators

who have been discernible among the higher bosses, the senatorial bosses, even the most brilliant of these orators, such as Roscoe Conkling, were simply rhetoricians and fighters, who looked at the great questions of the day in their personal aspect, with reference to the persons who were involved in the various controversies; they never connected their names with a legislative measure or left any other lasting trace of their activity.

The opportunism of which the boss is the living embodiment does not allow him to risk taking the initiative; he prefers to walk in the shadow of public opinion. Incapable of contributing to the movement of ideas, he finds it difficult to understand them, he grasps public opinion only in its crystallized state, so to speak; its aspirations and its impulses escape him, and its revolts take him by surprise. Observing and appraising mankind in detail, by their pettinesses, the boss is not qualified to appreciate the moral forces of human nature; a profound judge of men, he does not understand man. He never credits the citizen in general with virtue and intelligence, he is not aware that these qualities exist; his skill lies in seizing on the weaknesses of men. The few moral virtues of the politician which he possesses are narrowed in their exercise in the same way; he is devoted, up to the point of self-sacrifice, to his friends; a man of his word, he is so as long as particular persons are concerned; if he has promised places or favours he looks on his promises as sacred; but if he has promised reforms on the eve of the elections he snaps his fingers at them the day after. The courage and the confidence in himself which distinguish him in his acts fail him in the domain of ideas; growing timorous all of a sudden,

he stealthily watches public opinion to see if he can venture to go ahead without suffering for it.

Ways of the boss.

114. The methods of the boss are exactly adapted to his mind: he does not like discussion, the clash of ideas; he is a man of underhand action. He shuns the light of day; his element is intrigue, and he revels in it. He arranges everything secretly and keeps silence and makes his lieutenants keep silence until the moment comes for facing the public. But, while working in the dark, the boss does not hide himself, he wields his power quite openly. The Press is not sparing of publicity for his person, his sayings and doings; his supposed plans are constantly commented upon. This publicity is by no means distasteful to him: he is treated as if he were a great statesman. It must be added that the public also takes pleasure, a melodramatic pleasure, in following the sayings and doings of the boss. He appears to them, according to the description of newspapers which are not in the habit of laying on the colours too thinly, as a sort of Mephistopheles and Cagliostro rolled into one, who has endless tricks up his sleeve. What is he going to bring out of it now, what is he going to do, what has he just done — are so many questions and hypotheses which help to break the monotony of American life. It should be admitted that this curiosity is not the only feeling which gains the boss his undeniable popularity. This man who, sprung from nothing, has reached the very top of the tree, strikes the imagination of the Americans and flatters it. They recognize in him a master spirit. He excites admiration like those *conquistadores* who conquered and plundered empires. Even cultivated men of high integrity cannot always

Popularity of the boss.

resist this feeling of admiration for the favourites of fortune, honest folk or rascals, which pervades the air of the New World. One would almost think that they are proud of the bosses. The hostile cries and the objurgations which accompany the name of the boss die away as they descend further and further into the lower strata of the community, and the name alone reaches these strata encircled with a halo of notoriety.

Occult and irresponsible power.

Yet, as a general rule, the boss does not much care to put his popularity to the test of a popular vote; he does not often stand for elective office himself. Sometimes it is the flagrant inadequacy of his education which prevents him from filling a leading position; but more often he would run the risk of defeat owing to his reputation of wire-puller and election jobber, whereas, it he keeps behind the scenes, he can quietly pull the strings and secure the return of the men who suit him. The State boss likes to run for the Senate of the United States, for the very reason that he can obtain this position more easily by intrigue and corruption, the Senators being elected, not by universal suffrage, but by the State Legislatures, where the boss is often supreme. In any event, it is not in the public position which the boss sometimes fills that his power resides. That power is by its nature occult and irresponsible.

Profits of the boss, material and moral.

115. The boss none the less derives from it considerable personal profit, both of a material and moral kind. The first is the most important; he makes money, often he makes a large fortune. For the city boss this is the main, the sole object. Cases are quoted, it is true, of bosses who have died poor; but there are many

bosses alive and well who are very rich, who are "worth" at least $500,000, while having no avowable source of income. Where does the money come from? In the first place, the boss has absolute control of the party funds. Again, he receives commissions given by the great contractors for public works, by the companies which buy municipal franchises or other favours. Lastly, the boss makes money out of the pulls which he has on the representatives of authority, by ensuring, in return for a share in the profits, a lucrative connection to business men, to lawyers. It is only fair to add that if the income of the bosses is considerable, their general expenses are so as well; the boss has to spend a great deal to maintain his political position, to keep up the Machine. Sometimes the boss devotes his whole income to this, he does not grow rich by "politics."

The "disinterested" boss takes to "politics" from inclination; "politics" is his passion, that is to say, not the problems of politics in the ordinary sense of the word, but the intrigues, the combinations, and the gossip of personal politics. It is this kind of politics that he indulges in. The love of power, the satisfaction felt by the autocrat who exalts and humbles men at his good pleasure, is a still more common motive with the boss. He enjoys this power behind the scenes and on the stage. The tribe of politicians worship him as a king. He holds his court even in his country residences; crowds of office-seekers hang upon his nod there.

Relations of the boss with his lieutenants.

The principal lieutenants of the boss are on intimate terms with him, but in their relations there is always the more or less perceptible tone which characterizes those between sovereign and vassal. Yet, among these vas-

sals there are powerful ones, with whom the master has to reckon, as the King of France had to reckon with the Duke of Burgundy, the Duke of Normandy, the Count of Flanders. From this obligation not even a boss as absolute as the Tammany chief escapes; among his district leaders are men who do not depend on the boss either for their livelihood or for their position, who engage in "politics" from taste and ambition, and who wield an indisputable personal ascendency in their districts, — they have a crowd of vassals and lieges of their own. A State boss, were he as powerful as the Republican boss of Pennsylvania, is exposed to the schemes of some of his lieutenants, haunted by the wish to "set up for themselves." Sometimes there are open fights; the big boss has a bout with his unruly vassals, like Louis XI. with Charles the Bold, but in the end he comes to terms with them. When he can, he quells revolts by the exercise of authority or by sheer corruption; he deposes the district leader who is guilty or suspected of disloyalty; or he ruins him in his fief, he drenches the primaries with money to prevent the rebel from "getting the delegates," without whom the latter is powerless. To meet extraordinary expenditure, the boss blackmails the corporations, the financial companies, exactly like — and this again is a point of resemblance with feudal manners — the mediæval king, who extorted money from the burgesses, the traders of his good cities, to get the wherewithal for making war on a rebellious vassal.

Such is the boss in his public capacity. In his private circle he is often perfectly honourable; his family life is irreproachable, he can be depended on, he is exact in

the observances of religion, he has his seat in church. This holds good, also, of the subordinate politicians. The politician, great or small, simply puts in practice, without being aware of it perhaps, the doctrine of two moralities, the one for private, the other for public life.

Type of boss changing.

Within these last years there have come forward prominent politicians who employed the methods of the bosses for establishing and maintaining their ascendency, but used their power, more or less disinterestedly, for the public good. Men of character and of ideas, with wide and even lofty conceptions of public policies, they seemed to point to a new type of boss which might drive back the classic type. However, the specimens of that new type, of those white crows, are not yet numerous enough to vouchsafe a new genus. The politicians referred to might be simply exceptional personalities, and it would be premature even to speak of a "new game" inaugurated by them in "practical politics." The change which should be already noticed is this: the well stamped features of the boss presented to the reader are becoming in reality less striking, as if the pattern has become somewhat flattened.

Limited use of the boss's power.

116. The use which the boss makes of his extensive and penetrating power by no means, however, affects the whole of political life. He does not try, like the tyrants of the Greek cities or of the Italian republics, to assert his power over the *polis* in general. All his designs on the commonwealth amount, in fact, to running the elections as he likes, putting his followers in all the places, keeping out his opponents, protecting the first, making the second harmless, and realizing the

material profits attaching to these places and to the influence which they procure. Public policies themselves are a matter of indifference to the boss. If he "punishes his enemies," if he brings about proscriptions, it is solely in self-defence; he never meddles with citizens who do not go out of their way to oppose him. If he is often a despot, he is so rather from necessity, as a matter of business, than from inclination. His wish is, on the contrary, to make as many friends as possible, to please everybody; for whatever the source of his power, the material substance of it is composed of the votes of the multitude given to the candidates of the boss. A really intelligent boss is never gratuitously arrogant and despotic; he wields his power of tyrant with moderation and kindliness. No great merit, however, attaches to this. Even if he tried to go farther he would fall foul of the rights of the citizen, reserved by the Constitution. It is of no avail for the boss to be master of the executive and the legislature, for they are not omnipotent. The American Constitution has made the fundamental rights of the man and of the citizen safe from oppression by placing them under the sovereign protection of the courts, which can annul as unconstitutional not only administrative acts, but laws themselves; and the judiciary, taken as a whole, is not yet under the thumb of the bosses.

Havoc wrought in the municipal administration;

117. The point which is most exposed to the designs of the Machine is the municipal administration, owing to its ample resources offering abundance of loot and being, so to speak, within arm's reach. The finances of a city ruled by the Machine are always heavily burdened with useless and bloated expenditure. The

departments are invariably encumbered with a very considerable number of sinecures, the sole object of which is to enable the "workers" of the Machine to draw their salaries; useful public works are contracted for at extravagant rates; the exploitation of the monopolies in the gift of the city is granted for nothing, or for an absurdly small consideration. After all, it often turns out that the resources of the cities which are not afflicted with a Machine are not administered much more economically. The depredations committed by the bosses are made up for, to a certain extent, by a better, more responsible administration of the municipal departments, which is due to the members of the councils of these cities and their employees being more disciplined. The Machine which selects all the candidates for public office, while making them docile instruments, takes care to choose them as well as possible; and once they are installed in their posts, it sees that they do not compromise it. Instead of being responsible to the public, they must answer to the Machine; the responsibility is deflected, but it is genuine, and all the more so that the power of the Machine is more centralized, more personal, and more immediate. Besides this, the great mass of small employees are not dishonest; they accept their places from the Machine to earn a humble livelihood. And when they have discharged the first duty of their office, which is to serve the Machine, when this tribute on their time, their exertions, and their conscience has been taken, they honestly give the rest to the public. The municipal administration run by the most corrupt Machine — I mean Tammany Hall — affords striking proof of this state of things.

Of all the public departments in the large cities the most contaminated by the Machine is that of the police, whose co-operation is particularly valuable to it. The police in these cities is "full of politics." It shields from the public the frauds committed, at the primaries and at the elections, by the followers of the Machine; it molests the Machine's opponents when they want to exercise their electoral rights; it winks at the law-breaking drinking-saloons, at the gambling-hells and houses of ill fame, which pay blackmail to the Machine. But in other respects the police really does its duty, and does it, on the whole, fairly well. The other municipal departments are also infected with "politics," but in a lesser degree. The Machine treats them as a preserve for "spoils" — places, contracts, etc. It exploits, with this view, at one time the fire brigade, at another the hospitals, sometimes even the school boards, by putting on them, as a reward, political "workers" for whom nothing better can be found. But, however satisfactory the administration of the cities governed by a Machine may be as a whole, and however properly and conscientiously the employees may discharge the routine of their duties, the spirit which presides over the administration is always an unenlightened one, with no breadth or vitality.

in legislatures.

Nor is legislation wholly contaminated by the Machine. The State legislatures, which vote laws, at the bidding of the boss, to swell the resources of patronage or to bestow privileges or monopolies on companies allied with the boss, also vote good laws — laws of public utility. It is even easier to obtain such a law with the help of the boss. Instead of agitating and

bringing on the legislature the pressure of enlightened opinion which is often difficult to arouse, it is better to apply to the boss; the latter will give the order and the law will go through, like a letter in the post. In these cases boss rule offers the advantages of an "enlightened despotism." The boss exerts the same power to stop obnoxious attempts at legislation coming from individual members of the legislature, who want to blackmail wealthy companies by bringing in bills directed against them. If these companies enjoy the protection, duly paid for, of the boss, he holds up his hand, and the "striker" vanishes like a schoolboy caught in the act. The boss is equally successful in blocking a good measure brought in by an independent member, that is to say, a recalcitrant one in the eyes of the boss. Thus, in the State as well as in the city, the boss acts as a disciplining force, for good as well as for evil.

118. Wielding a power not only usurped, but also irresponsible, the boss is always liable to step out of the moderation which his character of usurper enjoins and which his means of action, as well as the barriers of the constitution, impose on him. As with every autocrat, absolute power makes him lose his head sooner or later; he becomes wilful, arrogant, and tyrannical; he exceeds all bounds in the effrontery with which he and his men use the public resources for their own benefit. At last the public's cup of patience runs over, a revolt breaks out, and the Machine is "smashed." This is the fate of every Machine, as it is of every brigand to end on the scaffold. It is only a question of time. But just as the death on the

Periodical revolts against the Machines.

gibbet of the bandit of Calabria or the Abruzzi does not prevent him from having a successor in the wilds which were the scene of his exploits, so the Machine which has been "smashed" is soon put together again by the same boss or by another, to meet the same fate in the end as their predecessors. It is a régime which recalls, to some extent, that which was defined by the words "a despotism tempered by assassination." Here the assassination is only symbolical; free institutions enable the revolution to be carried out in an absolutely pacific manner, by the simple action of voting papers. The American people have only, according to the phrase of the stump orator, to "rise in their might and in their majesty," and everything will come right. In reality, it is not so much in their "majesty" that the people rise as in their fury. For a long time impassive and apathetic, they start up all of a sudden in a paroxysm of wrath. The sovereign people strike without pity and without discernment, guilty and innocent will all do to make up the hecatomb which they must have.

Public opinion let loose.

The power of public opinion, which is supposed to weigh heavily, and does so really, in the United States, on everybody and everything, reaches the politicians in the end, but it reaches them in a more or less accidental way, which excludes all regular responsibility. The authority which public opinion wields over the Machine is rather the authority of Judge Lynch.

The deference and submissiveness with which the Machine is obliged to treat public opinion are, consequently, limited to the risk which it runs of awaking the Lynch which slumbers in the breast of the public. The Machine, it is true, pays great attention to public

opinion, it carefully watches the state of public feeling, and in cases where it is possible to satisfy public opinion without any great sacrifice on the part of the Machine, the latter does so with alacrity. But this is not often within its power, for if it always consulted the interests of the public it would ruin its own prospects. The bosses yield only when they cannot help it. But often the Machine tries its hand, in spite of this, and it is only after having been beaten that it mends its ways. Then it brings forward excellent candidates at the elections, adopts a humble, cringing attitude, practises virtue, until such time as public opinion goes to sleep again.

Other checks on the Machine.

119. The respectable members of the party, wealthy persons who, out of party loyalty, give the Machine large subscriptions to the election campaign funds, do act as a brake on the bosses when important candidatures are involved. Far more effective is the check imposed on the Machine by the Machine of the opposite party: whenever the two parties are evenly matched, a small number of good citizens can turn the scale; the two rival Machines are in that case obliged to vie with each other in cultivating the good graces of these independent electors, by making up their tickets with names of men as respectable as the business of the Machine will allow. This intervention of the independent electors supplies a corrective to the Machine, which is daily growing more important and more efficacious.

The most extensive limitations to which the power of the Machine and of the politicians is subject are to be found in the social and economic character of the

particular community. In places where the population is more homogeneous, and forms smaller sets, in which opinion has consequently more consistency and asserts itself with more force, the Machine cannot take the liberties which it does in large cities where public spirit is smothered under the huge agglomerations of heterogeneous elements brought together promiscuously. Its proceedings do not escape the attention of the public so easily, and the Machine is from necessity more circumspect and more moderate in its desires. In places where there are no large public works to be tendered for, or important contracts to be awarded, where there are no powerful corporations with extensive interests depending on administration or legislation, in a word, where the material for plunder is not considerable, the Machine is necessarily frugal. Hence the parts of the Union least contaminated by the Machine and the politicians are the country districts. The South, which is still largely agricultural and where big cities are very few, does not present a very favourable field for the development of the Machine. Apart from the two largest cities, New Orleans and Louisville, the odious type of the boss is hardly met with in the South. In the West the Machine prospers more, while exhibiting infinite variations in the extent of its power and its misdeeds. The great hotbed of the Machine and of the bosses is still the Eastern States, which are rich and populous, and where social differentiation has made the most progress.

A map of the Machine.

If on the map of the United States all the parts of the country where the Machine has developed were coloured red, the eye would at once be attracted to the

right by a large blotch formed by the States of New York and Pennsylvania with a strip of the State of New Jersey on the east, with the State of Maryland on the south, and the State of Ohio on the west, partly at least. This mass casts a faint shadow to the north-east over New England, while on the other side, to the west, the red will appear in more or less deep tints in the State of Illinois and will stain the neighbouring States, marking with scarlet points most of the large cities, such as St. Louis in Missouri and others of less importance, like Louisville in Kentucky or Minneapolis in Minnesota, and other smaller places among the large cities; then, after making a brief pause in the States of the Far West and leaving some patches there, it will flow toward the Pacific slope and deposit a thick layer of carmine on San Francisco; and, finally, jumping right over to the Gulf of Mexico, it will cover New Orleans with a similar layer. A very considerable space will be left hardly coloured at all or will even exhibit the shot colour to be seen in certain fabrics: these are regions or cities where the Machine has no stable and regular existence; rings of mercenary politicians form in them, disappear after a short time, and re-form under favourable circumstances. A good many points again on the map will appear almost white. It must not be forgotten, however, that the part of the map coloured red, while only a fraction of the whole country, contains almost a third of the population of the United States and represents at least three-fifths of its economic interests.

Again, owing to the civic upheaval which has taken place all over the country within these last years, and

The Machine weakens.

which will be enlarged upon in a subsequent chapter, the power of the Machine has weakened, and while bosses are still there, almost everywhere they carry on their trade with less disregard of decency, with more respect or rather more fear of public opinion. Slowly but certainly the Machine is undergoing a change. It puts better men in offices, it is more refined in its methods of exploiting the public, there is much less open stealing. Public opinion would no longer tolerate it as in the time of Tweed.

The power of the Machine analyzed.

120. But why is the power of the Machine, even limited and mitigated; why should it exist at all; why is it tolerated in the full blaze of democracy? The varied materials for an answer to this question have already been disclosed to us, and it now remains to recapitulate them in a more methodical way. The

Excessive elective system.

first and general condition of the Machine's existence and success is, of course, the extraordinary development of the elective régime and of the party system, which have created the necessity for a highly elaborate and intricate election machinery, worked by experts. But why should these experts be men of the stamp of "bosses," and how does it come about that they are able to keep a hold on the public concern and exploit it so easily? The most common explanation given is

Patronage.

that the Machine disposes of a large patronage, or, again, that it lives on rich corporations, and that if it had not one or the other of these resources, or both of them, it would die of inanition. This explanation is only partly true, it only deals with the material resources. Foremost among these, in fact, comes the patronage, the places in the public service of the

Union, of the States, and of the municipalities; these places, supplemented by the hope of getting them, furnish the pay for maintaining the army of politicians who serve the Machine.

Assessments.

Next come the principal direct receipts of the Machine — the assessments, the contributions paid by the candidates, and the percentage paid by the office-holders. The contributions of private individuals, of wealthy zealots of the party, are large enough. They sink, however, into insignificance beside those of the financial or industrial corporations. These latter are the great pillars of the Machine and in fact its partners. Where there is a Machine there are corporations at its back, where there is a corporation there is a Machine to serve it. Alongside of the corporations are the smaller pillars: the contractors, jobbers, and lastly the dive-keepers — all of them bent on breaking or cheating the law with the paid assistance of the Machine.

Contributions by corporations.

121. Still greater than its enormous material resources is the moral stock which the Machine disposes and which consists of the deliberate or unconscious adhesion of the various elements of the community. The Machine exists and works with their consent, and by no means in spite of them. The first of these social elements on which the Machine leans is made up of its own servants and of its nearest adherents, of the social category which is consequently known by the name of the "Machine element." These people work for the Machine as they would have worked for a manufacturer, a merchant, for any one who might have employed them. They get their living in "practical politics," quite honestly, since they are toiling

The "Machine element."

day and night. The work is rather dirty; this may be, but there are so many trades which involve handling unpleasant things; every trade has its processes, and "practical politics" has its own. The character of the pay, which consists of "spoils," is not objectionable either, it is almost part of the natural order of things. When the Creator, after making the two great lights of the day and of the night, made the two great political organizations, he ordained that they should divide the public offices between them. It is therefore only fair that these offices should be given to the men who have "worked" for the party, and to them alone.

By following this train of reasoning the men of the Machine come to consider the independent members of the party who oppose the Machines as odious and contemptible; these citizens not only prevent them from earning their living, but even try, while posing as champions of honesty, to get hold of the offices, without having "done the work" for the party; they are therefore hypocrites, full of "humbug and cant." At the best, they are only "doctrinaires," "college professors," "star-gazers," for the government without parties which they dream of is an idea as absurd as it is flagitious. This feeling of their uprightness justifies the conduct and stimulates the enthusiasm of the mercenary politicians.

The masses. In addition to this category, the Machine has on its side, in the first place, the mass of the people. The

The dregs. criminal and semi-criminal elements, the *déclassés* of every kind, who swarm in the large cities, are devoted to the Machine, because it buys them with cash or protects them against the law.

The honest poor and the philanthropy of the Machine.

122. The popular stratum which is superior in point of morality, but wretched, having only precarious means of existence, and which swells the army of the unemployed, also gets assistance from the representatives of the Machine; the boss régime, with its costly administration of the cities, benefits only a number of humble folk. The interested philanthropy and the other attentions lavished by the politicians win them the hearts of the people. It is no use denouncing the bosses as public malefactors, laying bare the corruption of Machine rule. The people answer, "It is good enough for us." In fact, they do not see the harm done by the politicians, but they know their urbanity and their generosity. Boss Tweed, when publicly convicted of monstrous depredations and sent to prison, lost none of the esteem and admiration in which he had been held by the lower orders of New York; they were convinced that Tweed had fallen a victim to the nefarious designs of the rich, he who was so kind to the poor. The Machine does not relieve their material wretchedness only, it also relieves their moral wretchedness. The leaders of the Machine have a kindly word for the humblest inhabitants of their district; they share in their joys and in their sorrows; they find a sympathetic smile even for the halt and the maimed; they shed a ray of human brotherhood on the most miserable of creatures. They do it automatically, in the way of business, to everybody without distinction; but they none the less appear as ministers of the cult of fraternity in a higher degree than the priests of the churches and the professional philanthropists: they are nearer to the people, they come in friendly contact

with them every day, and the people have confidence in them. They offer it a counterfeit of charity and fraternity, but if the people accept it so readily, the reason is that the real article is very rare, or inadequate, or badly distributed in society as it at present exists. The men of higher rank who come down as it were from the moon to exhort the people to vote for honest candidates opposed to the Machine, are strangers to them, and the people have no confidence in them because they belong to another social sphere.

Favoured by the separation of classes

Not that the lower-class elector prefers the corrupt man: he desires what is right at least as ardently as the "kid-gloved" gentleman, who comes down to preach to him political purity; his instincts impel him no less strongly toward what is honest and what is just, but he appraises honesty and justice in his own fashion. In his eyes the man who does his neighbour no harm, and who even does him good, cannot do harm to society and to the community. The lower-class elector still judges everything by the standard of private morality; he is as yet incapable of rising to the height of social morality. The intelligence of the masses does not preserve them any better from the attraction exercised by the Machine. The effort required to disengage the political questions at stake, to consider them in themselves, and to understand them, is too great. The popular mind is perfectly accessible to reasoning; sound arguments find an echo in it, but the question must be well defined and distinctly presented. Once the problem is grasped, the lower-class elector is just as capable of exhibiting public spirit as any one else. But the difficulty is to get at him and to make him open his

and the primitive morality of the masses.

mind confidently to arguments coming from outside; here, again, the social differentiation which is at work in the United States, in their turn, as in the countries of the Old World, erects a barrier between the people and the cultivated set, and accentuates the class antagonism which prevents common action.

Foreign element.

123. Among the humble electors there is a large element which, in the opinion of many people, embodies in a special degree this venality, this narrow morality, and this ignorance, and, for that reason, supplies the Machine with most of its supporters. The electoral category thus indicted is formed by the "foreign element," that is to say, by the immigrants. Coming from countries with less advanced political institutions, where they had lived in degradation and in misery, and incapable of promptly assimilating the spirit and the manners of the American democracy, these foreigners, naturalized as American citizens, whose number is counted by millions, cannot but become an instrument of political demoralization. Almost all the men of sound judgment whom I have been able to consult, in the East as well as in the West, of American stock themselves and some of them of very old stock, protested against this theory, and sometimes with anger, adding that the second generation of the foreign born citizens is the hope of the country. No doubt, the newly naturalized citizens are, for the most part, ignorant, but the proportion of ignorant electors of American origin is not less great. The wretched immigrants are easily bought, but the poor natives of the country are exposed to the same temptation, and not only the poor ones. I have already had occasion to

point out that bribery is rife even in the rural districts of New England among the well-to-do farmers, descendants of the Puritans. Several foreign elements supply, taken altogether, excellent civic material, such as the Scandinavians and the Germans. Even the Jews who have escaped from the ghettos of eastern Europe promise to develop civic qualities on American soil.

The upshot of the matter is that the immigrants make the task of democratic government rather more complicated; but the difficulty is only relative and temporary. The rising generation is assimilated with remarkable rapidity. The movement started in the last few years against immigration in a country which had always welcomed with open arms the oppressed and the unsuccessful of the whole world, is not so much founded on facts as due to the calculations of the politicians who, in order to get a little popularity, trade on the spirit of vulgar nationalism and on the professional envy and jealousy which foreign competition excites in certain sections of the working community. An eminent American has summed up the whole question in the following words: "Our danger is not from the contamination of foreigners, but from the surrender of ideals upon which self-governments rest or die."

The better element.

124. The natural guardian of these ideals — the social class which is superior to the masses by its knowledge and its wealth — has failed to do its duty. This class, which is called in the United States "the better element" because it is better off, leaves the public interest to its fate. The abdication of the better element is due to manifold considerations which, however, may all be referred to the eminently materialistic

spirit that animates the prosperous and wealthy classes. Meeting in one and the same exclusive preoccupation, that of "making money," these classes measure all things by the sole criterion, "Does it pay?" Now they find that politics "do not pay," that it is not worth while neglecting one's own business to attend to public affairs; that it pays better to submit to the depredations of a Machine than to lose one's time in fighting the bosses, at least as long as they keep within the limits of comparative moderation. Many members of the better element think themselves "too good" for politics; it is beneath them, it is too "vulgar." They think they have performed their civic duty when they have voted the party ticket on the day of the election; and some even do not go so far as this. The most "patriotic" among the members of the better element subscribe to the funds of the party, but refuse to make any personal exertion, to devote their time and their energies. Besides, the party fetichism which sways men's minds, makes many very "respectable" electors shut their eyes to the misdeeds of the Machine; they really believe that it is the other party which is a hotbed of corruption, that theirs is honest by virtue of its name. Others, more clear-sighted, groan inwardly, but take care not to kick against the Machine at elections, letting themselves be persuaded that the "life of the party is in danger," and that this is not the time to pick holes in the doings of certain representatives of the Organization.

Its abdication.

Blind acquiescence.

The timorous conservatism which characterizes most of the members of the better element makes them apprehend unspeakable catastrophes if they should leave

the beaten track of the party. Electors of a philosophic turn of mind take their stand on the proposition that the American government is a party government, that parties cannot exist without an organization, and that, this being so, the organization must be paid for. They refuse to see in the boss aught but the organizer of victory for their party, and do not see in him the corrupter of the Republic. Other electors, wiser in their generation, but deterred by respect for the world's opinion, are afraid of incurring the reproach which disqualifies a man more than anything else in American life, that of being "unpractical," of appearing on a level with a "college professor," capable of imagining that action can be taken in politics irrespective of one's party. Certain electors carry their independence so far as to speak with cynical unconcern of the parties, but, when the election comes, habit reasserts itself, and they cannot even make up their minds to "scratch" the party ticket. Lastly, certain electors — and their name is legion — are in blissful ignorance of everything that goes on within their party, of all the political scandals and the misdeeds of the politicians. They do not read the newspapers; they pay no attention to the denunciations, even the most well-meant ones, launched by the Press against the Machines and the bosses, for the Press has, through its own fault, lost credit with the public. Each of these electors of the better element reasoning in his own way, or not reasoning at all, ends by voting for the "yellow dog" run by the Machine.

Ignorance.

Personal interest.

125. An important section of that class does the same simply from self-interest. It is no longer the unconscious or half-conscious complicity of humble electors

anxious about their daily bread; it is the cool calculation of men who want things which the Machine is able to give. With the help of the Machine they can succeed better in business, as well as in the professions, and obtain honours, — honours which in the levelled society of the United States offer an irresistible attraction to a number of men. One has no idea how many there are who would like "to be something," to hold a public office, even for a short time, sometimes for its own sake, sometimes to be made a stepping-stone. Members of the bar cultivate the friendship of the bosses, do not scruple to join Tammany Hall, with a view to some position or other, — corporation counsel, prosecuting attorney, judge, — a position which will make the holder of it known to the public and extend his connection in case he is obliged to return to his profession. Men who are perfectly respectable and intelligent, but who have cast a longing glance on a public position, look at the Machine with friendly eyes: they are thinking of the "nomination." The representatives of the corporations docilely pay their tribute as " price of the peace," holding that their first duty is to think of the interests of their share-holders.

Those who are not restrained by what they consider their duty or their interest acquiesce without a struggle or a protest from simple habit or from apathy. The sort of prescription by which the régime of the Machine thus benefits has recently only been seriously broken in the civic upheaval referred to, but for how long? The imperturbable optimism, which is one of the essential traits of the American character, when confronted with the disorders caused by the Machine

The evil explained away.

in political life, simply says, "It will right itself," or, again, "With Americans the thing rights itself." It is not even shaken by the spectacle of the material ravages inflicted by the plundering politicians, but replies, "We can stand it; you cannot ruin *this* country." As for the misdeeds of the Machine, judged from the moral standpoint, there is no need either to make a fuss; they are part and parcel of the infirmities of human nature; men are not angels; "it is human nature." [1] Or, better still, a good many citizens, who are only too well informed, deliberately shut their eyes and stop their ears, — they deny the facts. One would think that, weary of the ever-present spectacle of bosses, they had made up their minds, on waking one fine morning, to cease believing in the reality of it, and to say to themselves that it is merely a delusion which has taken in sour-minded individuals or credulous foreigners. Lastly, when these citizens who assume that they know better are closely pressed and obliged to admit that the bosses are not altogether mythical beings, they declare that bossism is the inevitable outcome of all government, that without the boss there would be chaos.

The Machine supplies a government.

Here we have the clinching argument, which expresses the real view of the members of the better element; the boss governs in their place, he relieves them of the tedious duty of governing themselves, enables them

[1] With reference to the "human nature" argument, so frequently and so complacently used by the representatives of the better element, it is, perhaps, permissible to quote a joke from the comic column of an American paper. *Tommy.* "Paw, what is human nature?" *Mr. Figg.* "Human nature, my son, is the excuse generally offered by a man who has been acting like a hog!"

to attend to their own affairs. And here again is the true explanation of the success of the Machine: it is a government.

It possesses most of the attributes of a government in a high degree, except legitimacy of origin and honesty of motive; its staff, the "leaders" and the "workers," are recruited by natural selection and not by a formal process; they are representative of the great mass of the electors; they are united to it, and, above all, united among themselves by the closest ties of social cohesion, by feelings of mutual attachment and feudal loyalty toward the chiefs; individual responsibility and personal merit are the only principles which govern their relations; firmness, energy, and audacity characterize all their acts. These virtues are exactly those which are wanting to society at large, disintegrated, split up into sets, inert, and cowardly. These vital principles of government — absence of formalism, individual responsibility, and personal merit — are exactly the contrary of those which society submits to from the Machine itself, like an exoteric doctrine which, in the old days, made the vulgar an easy prey of the astute holders of the esoteric doctrine.

A government of plutocracy.

126. It is a government, but not that of the people by the people, not that which has been provided by the constitution. If not of the people, then whose government is it? Within these last years, which have witnessed a popular outburst against the money power, the query has been frequently answered: it is the government of special interests, it is a commercial oligarchy which owns the country. This assertion, this outcry is far from being unfounded, though as a

comprehensive definition of existing conditions it would be too sweeping. While analyzing the ways and means of the Machine, we have noticed the financial interests to which it is allied, which it is serving. They are not the only special, and at the same time corrupt or even criminal, interests which walk in the rear or in the front of the Machine, but they are certainly the most prominent, the most conspicuous and the most demoralizing. They are not bent on governing the country, — that is not their prime purpose, — but to achieve their greedy ends they lay hands systematically on all the departments of government. The similarity of the aims of the several moneyed interests and the natural identity of their methods bring about a co-operation among them which spreads like a cobweb over the whole area of government, so that government comes under their thumb as a matter of course. They offer the greatest market for all the corrupt forces in the community, and the latter are spontaneously drawn to them while the honest elements are delivered to them by the party.

Part assigned there to the Machine.

So far as this situation obtains, the perspective of the extra-constitutional government which we have traced would undergo a slight change: at the apex of that government would no longer figure the boss or the political ring but big business. The bosses would appear at a somewhat lower grade as agents and purveyors of the special interests, and that function they would share with other middlemen trading in public power, such as the lobby, the special combines of corrupt legislators or aldermen with the central committees of the dominant party if not of both parties at their back.

This sort of political trust headed by big business may have obtained, within the last decade or so, a rather wide extension, but it has not ousted the retail business of political corruption, carried on by local rings and Machines. Their methods may differ. The political trust like the industrial trust need not resort to the crude methods of spoilsmen; by a sheer concentration of corrupt forces it may achieve its objects in a gentle way; without robbing the public exchequer, it creates vast resources of enrichment for the special interests by spurious legislation or by evasion of existing laws with the connivance of their constitutional guardians. The bosses and Machines working with the old plant may come nearer to the traditional Tammany methods. The actual government in either case does not dwell where the constitution has placed it.

THIRTEENTH CHAPTER

THE EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES

127. PARTY organization, having produced the political conditions analyzed above, reaches its climax in the very seat of legislative power with the legislative caucus. Wiping out the interval of time, it overtakes that old institution and sets the crowning seal on the extra-constitutional government brought about by the new conditions.

Congressional caucus in the past.

The reader will remember that already in the days of the Federalists several members of Congress, and especially senators belonging to that party, were in the habit of holding meetings to settle their line of action on the most important questions pending in Congress, and that the decisions of those confabulations, termed by the familiar name of caucus, were considered as in honour binding the minority. These caucuses began to meet as early as the first session of the fifth Congress, perhaps even in the first session of the third Congress. The practice started by the Federalists, though violently denounced in the opposition Press, was followed by the Republicans (Democrats). A contemporary refers to it as follows: "During the session of Congress (the 8th) there was far less free and independent discussion on the measures proposed by the friends of the Administration

than was previously practised in both branches of the national legislature. It appeared that on the most important subjects the course adopted by the majority was the effect of caucus arrangement, or in other words was previously agreed upon at meetings of the Democratic members held in private. Thus the legislation has been constantly swayed by party feelings and pledges rather than according to sound reason or personal conviction."

The Congressional caucus soon assumed, as we are aware, the nomination of candidates for the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency, and performed that function till democratic feeling, which burst all over the country, forced the caucus to give it up. The popular tempest did not, however, sweep away the institution of the caucus, and it continued to determine behind closed doors the public action of Congress when a party measure was hanging in the balance. When the slavery question became so acute as to tear the parties asunder, the caucus could no longer assert itself; for the dissentients, too, there was then a "higher law." After the Civil War, with the advent of a strong and masterful party, the Republican party, the caucus returned to power. In the absence in Congress of a regular leadership, such as provided by English parliamentary conditions, the caucus, aiming at harmonizing the several elements of the party and securing concerted action, answered a real political need. But that secret conclave, working not in the daylight of publicity and responsibility, was too inclined to assume dictatorial powers. No less prominent a member of the party than Senator Charles Sumner was made to feel its rod of iron. Smarting under the restrictions imposed by the

Debates on it in the Senate.

caucus, Sumner raised in the Senate a debate (in July, 1867) on the obligations of a party caucus. He protested against "making the caucus not merely a sacred but a sacrosanct pact by which every one at the meeting is solemnly bound. . . . We are under obligations here to discharge our duties as senators. We cannot in advance tie our hands. . . . You violate the national constitution." In a later debate, in December, 1871, Sumner (who in the meantime had been deposed by the decree of the caucus from the chairmanship of the committee on foreign relations) treated the senatorial caucus as only a "convenience" and denied the binding force of its decisions.

About thirty-five years later, as recently as in 1906, a similar debate was raised in the Senate against the Democratic caucus, by a Democratic senator, showing it to be in plain violation of the spirit and intent of the Constitution of the United States and of the rights of a State to equal representation in the Senate, as a senator, under the caucus rule, votes not as a senator from his own State, but as a senator from the other States, whose senators define for him his duty.

How entrenched in habits and ideas.

128. This new fight against the caucus in Congress, after so long a lapse of time since the great debate raised by Charles Sumner, shows that the caucus is still alive. Indeed, it has become entrenched in American political habits and ideas. And it is not only as a consultative instrument for bringing together men pursuing common aims, for comparing notes, for eliciting the views prevailing among them on pending questions, and by that very fact helping to harmonize their divergencies — all most legitimate objects. The authority of

the caucus is not one of opinion, but of power, derived from the obligations towards party. It is above individual convictions and above the obligations of the oath of office. The moral communion, which the bond of party is supposed to form, is too high to bow to either; and conformity to its standards, as expressed by *regularity*, is a sure enough guide, and the only one. Vouched for by this test, that communion involves both duties and privileges. To perform its command is not only a duty but a privilege granted only to strict believers. Thus, recently a Republican congressman, elected in the State of New York against the regular party candidate, was denied admission to the Republican caucus in the House of Representatives, and as he could not participate in the Democratic caucus, he wandered like a poor ghost, until after one session the Republican caucus considered that his penance had been sufficient.

Largely superseded by the hierarchy.

Although the power of the caucus has remained unabated as of old, its opportunities have greatly diminished since the period following the Civil War. It proved a very inadequate substitute for constitutional leadership in the growing complexity of political and economic conditions, while the frittering away of the business of Congress among an increasing number of committees (above fifty) made more manifest the necessity for a concentrated authority. The centralizing process, which at the same time was going on in the life of the party Organization outside Congress and culminated in bossism, reached the Federal Capitol in the most direct way. The bosses, as we know, thronged Congress, and they brought with them not only their methods but also the authority they wielded over the local party

organizations which make and unmake senators and congressmen. A small inner circle was formed in each House of Congress which ruled the party as an ordinary boss rules his machine. In the House of Representatives, especially, that autocracy has taken formal shape in the extraordinary powers of the Speaker surrounded by the inner circle of bosses, by the "organization" as it is called. The deliberative character of the House has been almost obliterated, all legislative business and influence have fallen into the hands of the committees, and the committees were appointed by the Speaker. The chairmen of the most important committees together with the Speaker have become the dictators of the House.[1] Then, there was no longer the necessity, or the same necessity as before, for setting in motion the caucus in order to make the members fall into line; the word of command of the "organization" sufficed. There was nothing for members but to obey,—they were placed between the devil and the deep sea. The kicker was facing political annihilation in Congress, and consequently in his home district. He would get from the Speaker and the House "organization" no appointment on a committee which had anything to do; he would be relegated to the committee on acoustics or on a similar subject, where he could not make the slightest impression; his bills would be pigeon-holed in the committees; he would not even be recognized by the Speaker on the floor.

[1] After repeated assaults on the Speaker's dictatorship, made by "insurgent" members of the majority party, the Speaker has been at last, in March, 1910, deprived of his power to make up the committees of the House.

People in his district would soon realize the direful fact that he was not a "regular," and the local Machine would grasp it still quicker; it might even get word from Washington about it. He might be absolutely right in his opposition to the House "organization," but at the next election another man would get the seat.

The actual rôle of the caucus

129. The only privilege of the bulk of the members of the party is to choose their King Log, and that is done in caucus. So the chief, if not the exclusive, function of the caucus is now to deliver a *carte blanche* to the masters of the House. For that purpose at the beginning of each session a caucus is held to nominate the Speaker and to confirm the old rules of the House of Representatives. When there is discontent muttering against the ruling oligarchy and on some important occasion even mutiny is feared, a meeting of the caucus is resorted to, not so much to smooth the differences of opinion as to coerce the individual members into submission. Once a member has "gone into caucus," he must abide by the decision of the majority or become a bolter, an "insurgent," as the recent expression goes. That happens once in a while.[1] And the bolter has to take his political life in his hands, as a congressman pathetically explained it to the author.[2] As many a member would therefore

in the House;

[1] During the recent struggles against the arbitrary powers of the Speaker, a formal insurrection of a score of members took place, in 1909, in the Republican caucus of the House of Representatives. At the same time a certain number of Democratic congressmen bolted their caucus and joined the Republican *regulars* to uphold the autocracy of the Speaker.

[2] That has been openly acknowledged in so many words by the upholders of the caucus system in the Senate in the recent debate, of 1906, on the caucus already referred to. "The senator is free to defy the caucus, so maintained the latter's spokesman, and to vote as his

be unwilling to "go into caucus," the oligarchy convenes sometimes instead of a "caucus" a "conference," which latter is supposed not to be binding. The difference is perhaps rather theoretical. In any case the conference, and the caucus too, are used by the oligarchy as a means of reconnoitring. To be sure of obedience, it must learn the temper of the House, gauge the relative strength of different opinions, exactly as the city boss or the State boss is watching public opinion to know how far he may venture.

in the United States Senate;

In the Senate party divisions are somewhat looser, the position of the individual senator is much more exalted than that of a congressman, and the mutual relations stamped by the "senatorial courtesy" are anything but hierarchical. Again discussion is not stifled in the Senate by the rules as in the House. For these reasons the obedience of senators to the party behests does not come out so saliently as in the House. But in the Senate, too, there are the same extra-constitutional agencies as in the House, which work with the same effect. The caucuses, which are supposed to gather all the members of the party on a footing of equality, are more frequently convened than in the House, but their decisions are as binding on the individual senators with regard to measures which are declared party measures. The parties have in the Senate, too, their oligarchy formed into what is called familiarly the steering committee and formally

conscience directs. He only takes a responsibility at home between his Democratic constituents and his Democratic associates here." To which his opponent answered: "The senator from Texas has stated it correctly. . . . Unless a senator surrenders his conviction . . . he will be denounced as a bolter at home, and men know what that means."

the committee on order of business. This committee is chosen by the caucus. The official committees of the Senate are practically chosen as well by the caucus.[1]

The decisions of the caucus in the Senate and in the House of Representatives, while enacted by moral coercion, are not necessarily bad in themselves. They may be often sound and helpful for carrying on legislation. But they are as helpful for special interests getting hold of legislation. Those latter have their representatives in the caucus who behind its closed doors may easily work for them and do so.

130. In the State legislatures also the party caucus has long existed as a regular institution, and its vicissitudes have there been exactly the same as in Congress. The lower character of the State assemblies, the corruption which has so often been rampant in many of them, has only brought out in a more lurid light the abuses to which the working of that party engine is liable. The caucuses are now much less frequent in the State legislatures. One reason for this is that there is not much partisanship in these assemblies. The traditional party divisions modelled on those which obtain in Con-

in the State legislatures.

[1] The organ of a famous independent senator puts it in this way: "Legislation in the United States Senate is controlled by committees. The appointment of the committees is controlled by a party caucus. . . . The caucus is composed of a few bosses, a few independents, and many cowards and followers. The programme of the bosses is arranged in advance. It goes through without a hitch. . . . Less than a dozen bosses dominate legislation in the United States Senate. Their power is felt in every home. It pushes business up or down and confers privilege at pleasure. It checks the President of the United States, holds up his appointments, mocks his wrath, spurns his recommendations. It wipes four-fifths of the States off the map, and makes mere dummies of their representatives in the United States Senate" (*La Follette's Weekly Magazine*, January, 1909).

gress are here more of a formal character; most measures are adopted unanimously, very few matters are made party measures. Secondly, the infrequency of legislative caucuses is due, as in Congress, to the centralization of party management. In the State assemblies the command of the boss or of the ruling oligarchy is not less, but even more, efficient, so that it renders needless in the very great majority of cases the putting into motion of the machinery of a caucus. The Speaker and the House "organization" in the State assemblies are just as powerful in deciding the fate of a bill, and not less high-handed in the use of their power; the orders of the steering committee are as much obeyed in a State Capitol as in Washington. The complaint of the well-intentioned members of the party is that there is no caucus called, as a caucus means, after all, discussion. Lastly, in Machine-ridden States the organizations of the rival parties very often work in harmony; there is a collusion between them beginning in the primaries and ending in the legislature. The boss or the House "organization" need not resort to a caucus to repress the opposition of the honest members of their party, they will get enough corrupt members on the other side to make up a majority for their crooked measures.

The party caucus in the State legislatures is usually convened for the selection of office-holders, — the Speaker and other House officers, and of the United States senators. The decision of the caucus of the dominant party is equivalent to election by the Legislature. All efforts and influences are therefore brought to bear not on the assembly but on the caucus. The contest is frequently a very hot one, and the methods used in such

cases are not of the purest. The "lobby," the agents of the corporations, are most active in getting a Speaker who will appoint committees favourable to their special interests. Pledges may be required and given, with the result that the committees are packed in advance and the course of legislation is determined beforehand. It happens, but in very rare instances, that a dissenting minority bolts the caucus and votes against its nominees in the legislative chamber. The latter can get no majority, ballot follows ballot, and there is a deadlock. Sometimes the bolters succeed in tiring out the majority of their party, who are forced to give up their candidates; sometimes they unite with the opposition party and get in their men.

Once in a while caucuses are convened on measures. Very few are the cases when members do not answer the call. As a rule they "go into caucus," but sometimes, so as not to be bound by a decision which they disapprove, they leave before that decision is taken: they "walk out of the caucus." The real discussion, the real fight on the controversial measures, is in the caucus; the greatest speeches are made there. The proceedings in the legislative chamber are perfunctory. The bolting of the caucus occurs on measures just as on nominees for offices filled by the legislature, — in many a State Assembly there come out from time to time "insurgents." The bolters are sometimes high-minded men, and sometimes they are as bad as the Machine men against whom they revolt.

The caucus an epitome of the party régime.

When all is said, the range of influence of the caucus is not very wide now either in Congress or in the legislatures. But even with its limitations it remains

the highest expression and epitome of the régime of the party Organization. Its most salient features are here gathered within a small compass. Party discipline is reduced *ad absurdum:* a man is in conscience bound to vote against his convictions; *regularity* enjoins him to deviate from the path of duty; he is freed from responsibility for action he cannot justify. Majority rule, which is the pretence and the vindication of the caucus, is reduced to minority rule; not only is the minority of the party crushed out, but the majority of the legislative body is deprived of its will and its power. A corrupt minority may dictate laws. Freedom of speech is as much annihilated as freedom of vote, and legislation by discussion under the eye of the public is replaced by secret conclaves. Irresponsible bodies themselves, they free and shelter from all responsibility the representatives of the people; the most scandalous vote finds a ready excuse: "it was a caucus measure," they could not help it. Cowardly and servile to the behests of the party chieftains, these legislators may defy public opinion, which has itself conferred on them the power to do so by acquiescing in the false assumption of the sacredness of the caucus decision. While it shuts out publicity and responsibility, the caucus opens wide the gates for sinister influences and for corruption. The greedy corporations, the special interests all bent on getting privileges for themselves, on plundering the public under cover of the law made for their benefit, have only to stretch out their hands. Concentrating these efforts on a limited number of members, they get hold of the caucus, and this latter delivers them the legislature, which again sells them out the interest of the public.

Thus the constitutional government has its power transferred to and prostituted by the extra-constitutional body which has been allowed to fester in its bosom.

It does not matter much that the rôle of the caucus has been largely taken up by the House "organization" or the boss: they are but two reverses of the same medal; one has an individual face stamped on it, the other one bears a general imprint.

FOURTEENTH CHAPTER

THE STRUGGLES FOR EMANCIPATION

Struggle against political corruption.

131. MUST American democracy be wedded to political conditions such as those described; is there no way out of them? A number of good citizens, for more than thirty years, have not despaired and still do not despair of finding one. In fact this period, which has been marked in the highest degree by political corruption, has also witnessed manifold attempts, differing widely in scope, to lift the American democracy out of the condition to which Machine rule and the encroachments of business have reduced it. To conclude our enquiry we will now review these efforts.

Begun soon after the Civil War, they were brought about by the corruption of the party in power, the Republicans, whose mercenary elements supported by party discipline shamelessly exploited the public interest, and under whose auspices monopolies were established for the benefit of large industrial and financial concerns. The movement of revolt, therefore, assumed a double aspect — economic and political. The economic agitation broke out both in the primitive regions of the West, among the farmers who thought themselves injured by the arbitrary tariffs of the railroads, and in the East, where it was directed against the excesses of Protection which dated from the Civil War. The farmers'

Double aspect, economic and political.

movement created a hotbed of social discontent in the West, which became a permanent menace to the political stability embodied in the traditional parties. The anti-Protectionist movement took the form mainly of a propaganda of free trade ideas, and became in its turn a centre for free political thought, which attracted prominent men and independent minds from both parties, and constituted a training-school for the greater part of the staff that was to lead, during the next quarter of the century, all the campaigns for reform and liberty.

Revolt against Grant's re-election.

The first great uprising, however, occurred on the occasion of the presidential election of 1872. The President in office, General Grant, — who, in spite of himself, became the embodiment of the régime of party despotism and party corruption, built up on the artificially perpetuated antagonism between the North and the "rebel" South, — was a candidate for re-election. The prospect of seeing this régime obtain a new lease of power roused the indignation of several eminent members of the Republican party.

At the head of the movement was a naturalized German, Carl Schurz. When almost a stripling he took a part, and a romantic one, in the revolutionary events of 1848 in Germany. Having escaped from prison, he arrived, after a few halts, in the United States. Bred on the generous diet of the sentiments which inspired the men of 1848, Schurz married his exuberant young life to that of the American democracy. In a comparatively short time he became a figure in the political world, a diplomatist, a general in the army of the North during the Civil War, a senator, a remarkable orator,

a brilliant writer. Having risen in the Republican party, and with it, he now took up arms against it to serve the cause of the American democracy; and from that time onwards he will always be found in the forefront of the battle in all the emancipation struggles of the Independents.

Liberal Republicans.

132. The dissentient Republicans, called *Liberal Republicans*, decided to put up against Grant an independent candidate. To choose such, nothing better was hit upon than to summon a national convention, in accordance with established custom. The convention met at Cincinnati in 1872. The professional politicians were there in force, but the majority of the convention were animated with pure sentiments. However, the intrigues and the manœuvres, to which national conventions so easily fall a victim, got the better of that assembly. It was not the most distinguished candidate who was nominated, but a surprise candidate, Horace Greeley. A remarkable journalist, a man of great moral enthusiasm, but with a judgment far from unerring, without experience as a statesman, a notably eccentric man, he could not be taken seriously as future chief of the State. An out-and-out Protectionist, he had to rely mainly on the support of adherents of free trade. With such a standard-bearer the movement of the Independents was undoubtedly doomed to failure. His endorsement by the Democrats did not improve his position. Grant remained master of the White House.

Lessons of the campaign.

The very heated election campaign only brought out more strongly the political and moral discrepancy between the system of stereotyped parties and the actual

needs of the day. The Liberal Republicans were "branded as 'apostates' from their anti-slavery faith by the regular Republicans; but slavery, replied the dissentients, had perished for ever." . . . "They were called rebels, but the war had been over seven years and a half." . . . "It was charged that they changed sides in politics; but the sides themselves had been changed by events and the substitution of new issues for the old." The alliance of the Liberal Republicans and the Democrats, concluded under these circumstances, set up against the malignant attitude of the Republicans not only a moral example, but a new method of political action. This method lifted reality above convention, and instead of keeping men rooted in the disagreements and the animosities of the past, brought them together or separated them in accordance with the factors of the new situations. Co-operation for a political object between men who had been deeply divided on another question was so novel a thing that the Liberal Republicans were astonished and touched to "discover that the men whom they had been denouncing with such hot indignation for so many years were, after all, very much like other people."

The Independents as see-saw between the old parties.

133. Discouraged by the miserable failure of the movement of 1872, the independent Republicans changed their tactics. Their number increased, owing to the scandals of Grant's second administration, but they gave up the plan of forming a "third party," an independent party. They thought it wiser and more effective to play a see-saw game between the two parties, joining forces with whichever should bring forward better candidates and better measures. Having stepped

aside at the presidential election of 1876, because the candidates adopted by the national conventions of the parties, Hayes and Tilden, both appeared to be decent candidates, the Independents re-entered on the scene to check the candidature of Grant for a third term, launched on the eve of the elections of 1880. This candidature, contrary to the precedent created by Washington, which did not allow the same man to occupy the Presidency for more than two terms, was contrived by a few senatorial bosses. It not only threatened the country with a return of the political corruption which had marked the general's two administrations, but was an audacious attempt by the Machine to lay hands on the national government; the Machine stepped out of the local sphere, which had been till then the theatre of its operations. Owing to the rivalries of the leaders, Grant was defeated at the convention, as was also his principal rival among the "politicians," J. G. Blaine, by a "dark horse" — Garfield. The Independents were no longer under the necessity of following up their warlike intentions.

They come forth against Blaine

134. But four years later, in 1884, this necessity presented itself. J. G. Blaine, who had long been lying in wait for the Presidency, appeared to have it in his grasp this time. He was the most conspicuous and the most capable Republican politician. But his political integrity was very questionable; he was repeatedly accused, without being able to clear himself, of having used his official positions for his personal gain. The Republican National Convention paid no heed to that, and nominated him by a large majority. The next day the Independents proclaimed themselves in a state

of revolt. The investiture conferred on Blaine by the National Convention made it the duty of every follower of the party to vote for him unconditionally. Is party obligation superior to the moral obligation of every citizen to keep an unworthy man out of power? Must the individual conscience surrender to the formal decision of this or that meeting? Such was the sphere into which the Independents lifted the discussion. They proclaimed the "divine right of bolting," declared themselves ready to vote for the Democratic candidate if the person nominated for this purpose was an honourable man. When the Democratic National Convention adopted the candidature of a man who had earned the hostility of professional politicians, Grover Cleveland, the Independent Republicans at once rallied to him with emphasis, not in order to become an appendage of the Democratic party, but solely for the particular occasion, in order to ensure the best choice of the future chief of the State. The campaign was a remarkably vigorous one, in spite of the extremely unfavourable conditions under which the Independents had to fight. They had no local organization; they were attacked with violence, reviled, and derided. A contemptuous nickname was fastened on them, that of "Mugwumps." The word, which was taken from the language of the Indians, had a great success, like that other word of the same language—"caucus," but a success of a more elevated kind. The word "mugwump," which meant in the language of the Indians a chief, a superior man, was applied to the Independents in ridicule of the moral superiority which they assumed. But soon the Independents consented to be called by this name, and it passed

for Cleveland.

The Mugwumps.

into political language to denote a citizen who does not make a fetich of the party, for whom the party is not an end but only a means, who preserves the liberty of his mind and of his conscience in his political conduct. There was a regular revival of the spirit which in the old days had led the great abolitionist fight. Young men burning with enthusiasm became missionaries, going out into the highways to win souls. The purely moral plane on which the Mugwumps placed the contest for the Presidency, attracted the support of the clergy. Schurz was indefatigable, exerting his powerful eloquence in city after city, in State after State. The day of battle arrived, and Cleveland was elected President. This result, obtained with the aid of the Mugwumps, was highly significant and pregnant with consequences; it affirmed that the obligations of morality are as indefeasible in political life as in private life; it proclaimed that the conscience of the elector and his private judgment cannot be fettered by ties of party; it naturalized the Mugwump, gave him citizenship in American political life, with the position of arbiter between the parties.

Bolt of the Gold Democrats.

135. The bolt made by the Mugwumps was followed twelve years later by a still more formidable bolt, which took place, on this occasion, at the expense of the Democratic party when the Democratic organization thought it shrewd to adopt the free silver idea. The more cultivated and wealthier section of the Democratic party refused to follow, frightened by the prospect of the financial catastrophe which the establishment of a depreciated currency might entail, and by the revolutionary tendencies of certain elements allied with the

Silverites. The number of the secessionists was very considerable; never had such a bolt been seen before. While often actuated by personal or class considerations, the "gold Democrats," as the secessionists were called, were obliged to invoke the general idea of the independence of the elector's conscience. And never before had this idea been so complacently expounded and so widely accepted, even by those at whose expense the bolt was carried out. It was possible to quote the declaration of Mr. Bryan himself, made only a few months before the crisis: "No convention can rob me of my convictions, nor can any party organization drive me to conspire against the prosperity and liberty of my country. . . . A man's duty to his country is higher than his duty to his party."

The person of the candidate who, through a combination of circumstances, happened unexpectedly to represent the cause of the gold standard, — McKinley, the Protectionist champion, — inspired the Gold Democrats with but little enthusiasm; but they forgot, most of them, their differences of opinion with him on questions other than that of the currency, and thanks to their support he was elected. He was elected, not because he was McKinley, but in spite of his being McKinley. The Republicans did not triumph as Republicans opposed to Democrats. The victory was not that of a man or of a party. For the first time, at least since the controversy on slavery, the contest was fought on a special, clearly defined issue.

Single-issue organizations inaugurated.

At the same time, the new fact that the contest was no longer between two parties fighting on their memories and traditions, their sympathies and antipathies,

but between two solutions of a definite problem, called for and inaugurated a new mode of action, in the form of special organizations grouping the combatants on the exclusive basis of the particular problem in dispute. To defend the cause of the gold standard a "Sound Money League" was founded, with numerous ramifications in the country, which brought together for common action all the opponents of the free coinage of silver, irrespective of their views on other political questions. This league contributed greatly to the defeat of the Silverites by its vigorous oratorical campaign in which veteran Mugwumps like Schurz, orthodox Republicans and lifelong Democrats fought side by side. Soon afterwards, when, in consequence of the war with Spain, the country was agitated by the problem of "Imperialism," the policy of territorial conquests in which the Republic was becoming entangled, the opposition to this policy took shape in an "Anti-Imperialist League." This free organization brought together men who the day before had been fighting one another on a different issue, Silverites and adherents of gold, Republicans who had never deserted their party and Independents.

"Third parties" undermining party regularity.

136. Party regularity beaten down inside the parties, by the bolts to which political issues had led, and by the combinations formed by members of various parties on single issues, was also undermined by the independent parties or the "third parties," which we have already seen on the political stage in the guise of the party of "Liberal Republicans." The other "third parties" were, for the most part, formed in opposition to the existing economic régime, they were the expression

of the social discontent which arose after the Civil War, especially in the agricultural West, and which I have briefly referred to at the beginning of this chapter. The pursuit of economic panaceas gave birth, in this way, to a whole series of new parties which, after an ephemeral existence, disappeared to revive shortly under another name and promote more or less analogous or kindred objects. The most considerable independent party was the "People's party" or "Populists," a semi-Socialist party developed in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

The advent of these independent parties did not fail to throw the ranks of the old parties into confusion by detaching from them a good number of adherents, and by introducing fresh elements of uncertainty into their existence. The cause of the emancipation of the elector's political conscience benefited thereby in consequence, but in an indirect or negative way and to a limited extent. Most of the new parties had but a local existence. Those of them which attained the rank of a national party, such as the Populists, and succeeded in winning seats in Congress, nay, even in the Senate of the United States, owed their success to the alliances which they made with the old parties whom they denounced, in one place with the Republican party, in another with the Democratic party, joining forces in each case with the party in a minority against the party in power. This being so, the dissolvent action which they were able to exert on the old parties was largely neutralized. The utopian character of the favourite remedies of the new parties, or of certain of their remedies, has, in its turn, limited the dissolvent action of these parties.

Their limitations.

It has even brought discredit on "third parties" in general, and has helped to popularize the idea that a "third party" is always utopian, and that a man of good sense joins one or other of the regular parties.

Prohibitionists.

This discredit brought on "third parties" has not been removed by the oldest of them, the Prohibition party, which aims at the prohibition, by law, of the manufacture and sale of spirituous drinks. It rose against the old parties whose organizations protected the saloon-keepers in return for electoral services received from them, and purposed to capture power in order to carry the much-needed reform. From 1872 onwards the Prohibitionists ran candidates for the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency of the Republic, with a modest but increasing success. The adhesions to the Prohibitionist cause were partly due to the concern aroused by the growth of alcoholism, but to a great extent to the disgust with the old parties which was spreading among honest people. But since the presidential election of 1896 the Prohibitionist vote has been going down. The cause of prohibition on the contrary makes very great progress, and in the last few years its champions have succeeded in getting anti-liquor legislation enacted in most of the States, especially in the South. This result has been largely secured by a non-partisan organization, the Anti-Saloon League.

Socialists.

The latest third party of real importance is the Socialist party, which polled at the presidential election of 1904 408,000 votes, and at the election of 1908, about 424,000 votes.

137. The sphere of local politics, that of the States, was much more frequently the scene of resistance to

party discipline and Machine rule; but this resistance had less significance, because more often than not it was confused with the rivalries of the national parties and the local quarrels of the "ins" and the "outs." Even when sincere, the attempts at local independence quickly died away under the concern for the welfare of the party in the sphere of national politics; that anxiety soon revived party passion and brought the dissentients back into the fold.

Local struggles with the Machine.

The separation between municipal affairs and the interests of national politics was somewhat more easy to establish in the public mind. The contests, therefore, with the Machine in the municipal field, could more easily influence electoral manners. In this respect, certain revolts against the Machine in the large cities marked epochs in American political methods for the same reason as did the national movements which we have just been considering.

The first of these municipal risings was brought about in 1871, at New York, by the misdeeds of the famous Tweed Ring. Public-spirited men with no formal mandate, without the hall-mark of a caucus or of a party convention, volunteered to lead the assault against corruption. They formed themselves into a committee, which became famous under the name of the "Committee of Seventy," and included men of different professions and political opinions, — lawyers, bankers, merchants, professors, men of letters, clergymen. The Committee instituted an enquiry into the abuses denounced by the Press, proved its case, and brought the members of the Ring to justice. Then it carried the next election, by making the issue turn

Rising against the Tweed Ring.

solely on the question of honest government. The Ring was dislodged, the abuses were partly corrected, but the attempt to set up a municipal government free from party taint failed. Soon afterwards, the good citizens having relapsed into political lethargy, the city of New York, as we are already aware, found itself once more under the sway of Tammany Hall.

"Committee of Seventy" initiates new methods

Nevertheless, the "Committee of Seventy," which soon disappeared, had not lived in vain; even before the struggles with party tyranny had begun in the sphere of national politics, it had, in some measure, laid down the new principles of public action, which were about to make laborious progress, at one time in the field of national struggles, at another in that of local contests. In fact, the organization of this "Committee of Seventy," without any popular mandate, broke the prescription established in favour of the democratic formalism which had converted the evolution of the leadership into a mechanical process. The precedent was created, and from that time onward similar "self-appointed committees" became tolerably common in the struggles with political corruption. Again, the Committee of Seventy outlined a new base of operations, consisting not of the stereotyped organization of an existing party, but of a free combination of men without distinction of party effected for a definite object. The struggles against party corruption and tyranny were to be crowned with success, at least with moral success, in the precise degree to which use was made of these new methods of civic liberty and duty.

138. The most celebrated municipal Ring next to that of Tammany, the Gas Ring of Philadelphia, was

overthrown by the same means as Tweed's clique. But here too the effect was not lasting. The civic apathy of some and the sordid egoism of others reasserted themselves. The candidates of the "Committee of One Hundred" (which directed the reform movement after the fashion of the "Committee of Seventy" in New York), when elected, often betrayed it and went over to the regulars, who, they foresaw, had more staying qualities. The people became restive, and refused their support to what jarred on their conservative ideas and what they were pleased to call the dictation of an autocratic, self-constituted body. The cry was raised, "Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?" However, no more appropriate method was discovered for making war on the Machine; and whenever in a city the good citizens, weary of boss rule, organized a rising, recourse was had to a "committee of one hundred" or "of two hundred." New York, which had started this kind of committee in 1871, itself felt the need, more than twenty years later, of calling in a new "Committee of Seventy" to fight the corruption of Tammany Hall.

uniformly used against Rings and Machines,

The victory over Tammany was a brilliant one, but as it was achieved with the help of political organizations which were the rivals of Tammany, it allowed them to claim and to get for their men places in the municipal administration, to the great prejudice of good government. This case was not unique. All the movements described by the epithet of independent paid their tribute to party influence. It was all very well applying to them the title of "citizens' movements" and giving the name of "citizens' tickets" to

however, with the help of Regulars.

their lists of candidates, as opposed to the Machine slates. To succeed, the Independents courted or accepted the alliance of a regular party. Such alliances, when victorious, helped the cause of good government, first of all, by the proof which was afforded that the Machine was not invincible: the spell protecting it was broken. Moreover, a purification, at all events a partial and temporary one, of the government was obtained. But the Independents, having agreed to "fight the devil with fire," were obliged to make allowance for the fire and to admit of a partial application of the spoils system.

Genuine independent movement against Tammany.

139. After the city of New York, which had been rescued, in 1894, from the power of Tammany, had experienced a few years of the new régime, the Independents thought that the city was ripe for a genuine emancipation movement as regards the parties and the Machines. At the municipal election of 1897 they organized themselves into a "Citizens' Union" and fought a battle which riveted the attention of the whole country and, it may be added, of the civilized world. Its platform boldly proclaimed the principle of non-partisanship and put forward an exclusively municipal programme: "The Citizens' Union is by no means opposed to the national parties; it asks no citizen to abandon his party. The Union merely demands that our city officers shall no longer be chosen because they are ready and able to promote the aims and ambitions of one or the other of the national parties. In national elections we must have national issues, but in city elections city issues alone should be considered." In consequence the Union refused to enter into negotiations

with any party organization even opposed to Tammany Hall, and itself selected, in perfect independence, as candidate for the post of mayor, Mr. Seth Low, who had a brilliant municipal record as a reforming ex-mayor of Brooklyn. To ascertain the reception which Mr. Low's candidature would meet with among the general body of the electors, the Citizens' Union asked for the signatures of all those who approved of it. In a short time it collected more than one hundred thousand signatures from men of every political party and of every rank in life. Seth Low's campaign.

This direct appeal to the people, for the choice of a candidate, over the head of all the regular organizations, and this popular investiture which ignored party distinctions, was a veritable revolution in American political methods. If it were to become the rule, then the occupation of the Machines would be gone. The prospect of the defeat of Tammany was small consolation to its Republican rival; its own existence was endangered. The Republican Organization preferred to deliver Greater New York into the hands of Tammany. It put forward a third candidate, an orthodox Republican, intended to attract the votes of all the "good" Republicans and prevent them from going over to Mr. Low. This strategy achieved its end. Out of close on 500,000 votes recorded at the poll, Mr. Low obtained nearly 150,000, the Republican candidate over 100,000, and the Tammany candidate nearly 230,000. One hundred and fifty thousand votes, deliberately given to a candidate opposed to the bosses, at the first trial of non-partisanship in municipal government, in a city as little capable of displaying public spirit as the city of New York, was undoubtedly a success.

Faulty methods of the Reformers acting spasmodically.

140. This result showed that the struggle undertaken against the Machine was not a hopeless one, but it also proved — for the hundredth time, it is true, or for the thousandth — that it was not by sudden attacks culminating in a furious assault that the enemy could be overcome. The "Reformers" had never acted but in a spasmodic manner, by fits and starts; when they roused themselves it was always too late, the politicians were always a long way ahead of them in the popular mind. Moreover, the Reformers inclined too much to oratorical resources and did not know how, — or but seldom made up their minds, — to put their shoulder to the wheel, whereas the Machine did nothing else; it "worked" the electors, one by one, caring nothing for displays of eloquence. Even the more or less successful "citizens' movements" were paralyzed in their effects by the exertions which they entailed: the heroic character of these efforts soon wore out the zeal of the Reformers, and filled them with a conceit which made them complacently celebrate a triumph on the occasion of the slightest success. To checkmate the Machine, or at all events to cope with it, it was necessary to display a less heroic, but more methodical and more steady, activity.

New departure: permanent civic leagues.

This lesson taught by experience was at last grasped. Attempts were made to apply it with an effect which opened a new chapter in the history of the independent movements and of American political methods. The new departure consisted in non-partisan associations, leagues formed on a permanent basis for systematic warfare against civic indifference and political corruption. They almost always aimed at municipal

government. Some of these leagues assumed the functions of vigilance committees, which kept a daily watch on the people's representatives and the officials, and put constant pressure on them to keep them in the path of duty. They also made it their business to detect infringements of the law and prosecute the offenders. Other leagues were rather committees of investigation and for initiating legislation. Others, again, endeavoured to form, by combining together, centres of moral energy and of civic enthusiasm which would provide a steady supply of motive power in public life; they tried to bring the citizens together and to include even the humblest electors in civic co-operation by taking them into a social alliance. Some of these free associations made it a rule not to intervene in the elections, while others openly took part in them by deciding between candidates chosen by the parties or even by nominating candidates on their own account, or, again, they simply volunteered information to the electors on men and things, likely to guide them in their vote, without trying to influence them in other ways. Several leagues combined these various methods of action. The outburst of civic leagues began in the second half of the decade 1880–1890 and attained a luxuriant development in the following decade. Among these organizations may be cited the City Club of New York with a number of Good Government clubs in the several districts of the city, the Citizens' Association in Boston, the Reform League of Baltimore, the Municipal Voters' League in Chicago, the Municipal Association in Cleveland, etc.

141. The success of these leagues was very marked

Development of the civic leagues.

in many a city. At the elections the voters accepted their recommendations with alacrity, most of the candidates condemned were beaten, and most of those whom the leagues supported were elected. In Chicago it frequently occurred that the bosses themselves submitted to the league beforehand, in confidence, the candidates whom they intended to bring forward, and if the league rejected them and said it would oppose them, the bosses put better candidates before it. Equally valuable services were rendered by leagues which confined themselves to the special work of enforcing the laws and the regulations which are so often defeated by political influence or by negligence. Such are the Law Enforcement Societies and the Law and Order Leagues, which at one time made up for the shortcomings of the authorities by instituting legal prosecutions through their detectives and their lawyers, and at another time put pressure on the officials to make them do their duty.

The parallel existence in one city of societies whose energies devoted to local public life met or crossed, and the necessity of mustering against political corruption and civic indifference all the moral forces of the community, whether organized on a philanthropic, or religious, or economic, or social basis, suggested the idea of bringing them into a central focus. This idea took shape in the creation of Civic federations. Chicago set the example, which was very soon followed in several cities, such as San Francisco, Detroit, St. Louis, Boston, etc. The work of inspection and enquiry carried on by the model Federation of Chicago extends to the schools, to conditions of labour in factories, to conflicts between

employers and workmen. The Federation has its police, its staff of detectives, its sanitary inspectors; it prosecutes law-breakers; it resorts to agitation, and at the same time gives lessons in good government, as, for instance, by having the principal streets swept for several months at its own expense and at a cost of twelve dollars per mile instead of the twenty-seven paid by the city.

Several of the civic leagues solicit and receive the help of women. The co-operation of the latter in civic movements is becoming more and more important. Holding aloof from party politics, women descend into the arena to combat the corruption engendered by the parties, sometimes joining the men, sometimes hoisting their own flag, organizing municipal leagues and civic clubs composed of women. Some rush into the electoral fray, others endeavour to arouse public spirit in a less militant fashion in the social or philanthropic field. Special citizens' leagues are founded under the banner of Christianity "to make Christian principles operative in public affairs." Societies for political education, recently founded in various places, work on the same lines by means of lectures and discussions. But the most powerful help comes from the independent Press. Its importance and its influence are growing daily. The rise of the independent Press is alike one of the effects and one of the causes of the public awakening which is working against party politics.

142. On the whole, thanks to all these varied efforts brought to bear on municipal government, the aspect of things has changed perceptibly for the better. The disorders which marked the administration of the

Beneficial results in municipal government.

American cities have been remedied to a not inconsiderable extent; and interest in the public welfare, at all events within this limited sphere, has been awakened to a greater degree than has ever been the case since the Civil War. Municipal reform is not only before the public, but is fashionable. It has become almost the correct thing to dabble in it. Electoral manners are already strongly influenced by it; party "regularity" is no longer observed with the same strictness at the municipal elections; a "straight ticket" is no longer voted with the same devotion; the "citizens' tickets," including candidates of different political complexions, are habitually victorious. In the sphere of national politics, the cause of civic independence is very far from having made the same progress; there regularity is still the supreme law. However, the national political life itself did not wholly escape the new notions about the independence of the elector's conscience, even apart from the tangible successes which Mugwumpism obtained in certain great crises, by contributing to the defeat of Blaine and to that of Bryan; these notions pervaded the political atmosphere, exercising a subtle and deleterious influence on the traditional sentiments of party loyalty.

Influence of Mugwumpism.

143. Since these lines were written at the close of the nineteenth century, now about a decade ago, a still greater change for the better has taken place, a change which has been called by many a revolution. The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed an unexampled prosperity and an extraordinary concentration of financial undertakings. Wealth became more defiant than ever of the general interest and even

Upheaval against "predatory wealth."

of common honesty. The patience of the American people burst at last. Their eyes were opened to the greed of the corporations, to the dishonesty of high finance striding along with political corruption, developing it, exploiting it. And with angry passion the people longed to smite them. The feeling aroused found a most powerful interpreter and inciter in the new President who unexpectedly succeeded McKinley — Mr. Theodore Roosevelt. His exceptionally combative temper delighting in a fray, his aggressive honesty and his passion for public utterances were turned against "illegitimate wealth" and political corruption. The whole nation was made to listen to his daily imprecations of iniquity and exhortations of righteousness. The Press seconded him in that crusade. The denunciations of "predatory wealth" and of crooked politicians became a necessary part of the daily diet of the American citizen. The supply seemed inexhaustible: the systematic graft in the great cities, the abuses of the corporations, now of insurance companies, now of Standard Oil, now of the meat packers. The Trust and the Boss became a great moral issue, and an emotional hatred of the abuses they caused seized the popular mind. The better element allowed themselves to be roused from their selfishness and apathy. Many well-intentioned people who had kept aloof came out, gathering courage and energy from the President's moral backing. Young men of good families, inspired by Mr. Roosevelt's example, went into politics, entered even the party organizations with a view to purifying them. Reformers and reform received an extraordinary impetus. Civic leagues and good government associations multiplied

Roosevelt.

Civic revival.

tenfold. Along the whole line there was a mobilization of forces against graft and political corruption.

While the stirring influence of President Roosevelt carried the middle class, the feeling of discontent with existing conditions was awakened or intensified in the lower orders from several other quarters, political and non-political. The socialist idea made great progress, and the Socialist party, till then insignificant, gathered strength and votes. The Prohibition propaganda pursuing the suppression of the liquor trade made tremendous strides all over the country, aiming alike at the saloon and at the politician behind it, both made more contemptible amid the general moral upheaval. The urban masses of some of the greatest cities were stirred up by a radical millionaire from the West, Mr. W. R. Hearst, who, equipped with his millions, came out single-handed against the plutocracy and the corrupt parties, forming a party of himself and, as his opponents say, for himself. The papers which he started, while representing the extreme type of sensational journalism, not only aroused the masses but forced even the "respectable Press" to adopt a more radical tone.

Hearst.

These different influences united to impress the American people with the notion that they were robbed by high finance and corrupt politicians, that they had to recover representative government, that they had to restore democracy in America. While several proposals and attempts to achieve that purpose by legal enactments, which will be examined in the next chapter, have been made, the awakened consciousness of the nation manifested itself all over the land in a violent

anti-boss movement. That movement reached its climax at the elections of 1905, with the result that in State after State many a boss remained on the battlefield.

The searchlight of publicity.

144. Along with pitched battles against bosses and grafters there has developed a more methodical way of fighting them through continuous publicity thrown on their doings. The idea obtained that people tolerated the abuses because they did not know of them. The work inaugurated by vigilance committees and associations, like the Chicago Municipal Voters' League, in the preceding decade, extended and broadened. Not only did the leagues publish at the eve of elections the records of the candidates, for the instruction of the voters, but the measures under discussion in the legislative assemblies were, as soon as presented, scrutinized and explained to the public by special bureaus of investigation kept up by public-spirited citizens. The pressure of opinion was brought to bear on crooked legislators, who used to sell out the public interest unheeded. By analogy with the classical agency of the lobby, working on behalf of private interests, those representatives of the good citizens were called "the people's lobby." Such watch bureaus have been established at Congress in Washington, at the legislatures of New York, Illinois, California and elsewhere. The searchlight of publicity thrown on legislators and legislation was projected on administration as well with the object of promoting efficient and economical government. A Bureau of Municipal Research, founded in New York by and at the expense of a few high-minded citizens, opened the way in that direction. It is an

independent investigating body, which aims at securing constructive publicity in matters pertaining to municipal problems; it collects, analyzes, and interprets facts as to the administration of municipal government. It asks for the co-operation of the city officials, and gets it from their fear of public opinion.

Direct appeal to the people.

The voluntary leaders who come forth in increasing numbers at the head of those Bureaus of Research, People's Lobbies and Voters' Leagues appeal from the party organizations to the people. That is the new method — strange as such an innovation may appear in a democracy. That method has been taken up by the best of the highest public officers themselves, State governors and mayors, who, when confronted by the Machine in the legislatures on this or that measure, go straight to the people, stumping the State or the city. On these lines were carried on, during these last years, the greatest and most successful struggles against the Machine in Wisconsin, Missouri, Minnesota, New York, by Governors La Follette, Folk, Johnson, Hughes. The battles waged by the governor of New York, now acclaimed by the people and striking to all appearances the Machine at its very heart, and now defied by the Machine and kept in check by it, formed the most dramatic incident in recent politics and the most characteristic of the existing conditions. Indeed, in 1905 and since a great number of bosses were slaughtered, but the Machine is still standing. The fundamental conditions, political, economic, and social, which make for the boss are still there, and in many quarters a fear is expressed that the Machine may wear down the good citizens called out on a vigilance duty to which they are unaccustomed.

145. However, the movement has affected deeply enough, for the better, the political society at large, the parties, and the Machine itself. In public life a higher tone prevails, the ethical standards have improved in politics as well as in business. There is in the community more political and social consciousness, the individual is more impressed with his duties and responsibilities towards the State and his fellow-men. The better element have developed a greater interest in civic affairs, and the private citizen in public service is now more prominent than ever before. Under the exposures of the abuses not only has moral callousness given way but also intellectual supineness and self-complacency; the public mind has broadened, become more accessible to ideas and more tolerant of what had been hitherto considered as radical notions.

Results achieved.

This greater mental freedom has manifested itself most saliently in the life of the parties, where boss rule has given an object-lesson of the effects of party idolatry. The latter has not been destroyed, but it has lost great numbers of its worshippers. In the States of the Middle West especially the lines of party have been broken and brought into utter confusion. Third parties have been developed or formed anew. The Socialist party has made strides. Mr. Hearst founded an Independence League, proclaiming that the reforms necessary for restoring the power of government to the people could not well be accomplished either within the old parties or in conjunction with the old parties. This new organization, after having played a prominent part in upheaving the political soil of New York and bringing its creator almost within reach of the

Extraordinary growth of independence in politics.

mayoralty of the Atlantic capital, was, like so many third parties, not a lasting success. But independence asserted itself most powerfully within the old parties. Swarms of voters cast off party regularity like an old garment and shifted from one party to another, looking out for the better candidate or the sounder issue. In municipal elections especially voters began to care much more than at any time before not for the party label but for the merit of the man. This tendency spread into the State elections and even to the national elections. People voted at the same time for a Democratic governor and for a Republican President or *vice versa*. The voting of a split ticket became quite common. Party lines became less and less rigid.

The independent voter having become a power in the land, the Machine had to recognize him, to cater for him, to become more decent. Tammany Hall has presented a most eloquent example of it. The caliber of candidates has greatly improved all over the country. The municipal government has become purer. The legislatures too have improved in many a State. The force of public opinion, used more frequently, became more potent. The possibility of appealing to it successfully, through discussion of issues and of persons, has been demonstrated over and over again.

More easily aroused, public opinion is still liable to proceed by spasms, and there is a strong tendency to make up for personal exertion and continuous vigilance by some contrivances of governmental machinery, a tendency to expect salvation from the legislator.

FIFTEENTH CHAPTER

THE STRUGGLES FOR EMANCIPATION (*conclusion*)

146. THE tendency to put down political corruption by means of legislation took shape from the very beginning of the struggles for emancipation. At the same time as the "Reformers" endeavoured to dislodge the politicians in pitched battles, they tried to suppress the opportunities for corruption by legislative reforms. Their first attempts were aimed at the degradation of the public service by the spoils system. This system, which had made public office an electoral coin for rewarding services rendered to the parties or simply to the bosses, had alike demoralized political life and deteriorated the government. Skill in electoral wire-pulling and "work" done for the party constituted the sole claim to office, at the expense of real merit and even of honesty. Owing to the practice of rotation, the government departments were periodically upset with every change of the party in power. The President and the heads of the departments with whom the appointment to offices rested as a matter of right, and the members of Congress who had snatched it from them, were all continually exposed to the solicitations of the office-seekers. They had to waste with them, even in the gravest conjunctures, the time that ought to have been given to affairs of State. Lincoln said, a

Legislative measures against corruption.

Spoils system attacked

month after his accession, that he wanted to attend to the Southern question, but that the office-seekers took up all his time. His successors have not fared any better. Every aspirant wanted to "interview" the President, even when the appointment was not in his gift. The greedy throng pressed on at Washington, and if some came back empty-handed, others succeeded in carrying off the places by sheer importunity. The Republic was regularly looted. "If ever," said Lincoln on this subject, "this free people, if this government itself is ever utterly demoralized, it will come from this wriggle and struggle for office."

It was absolutely necessary to withdraw the selection of officials from political favouritism, from party influence, but how? The experience of the mother country appeared to offer the means in the form of a system of admission to office by open competition. Favouritism had long flourished in England and with equally disastrous effects; the patronage of the Crown, which afterwards passed into the hands of members of Parliament, had been but a source of corruption, and at best made public office an appanage of the privileged few. The competition system introduced into England, from and after 1853, for admission to the lower-grade appointments, had thrown these open to merit. A modest Congressman of Rhode Island, Jenckes, made himself the promoter of a similar reform in the States. Year after year, from 1867 onwards, he indefatigably submitted to Congress a series of bills supported by a remarkable array of data, but without success. The places, which cost the members of Congress nothing, provided a large fund with which they could buy elec-

by a plan of merit system in civil service.

toral services, and they had not the slightest wish to deprive themselves of this resource, in spite of all the annoyance caused them by the importunities of the office-seekers. From that time a duel began between the politicians, with the members of Congress at their head, who clung to the spoils system, and public opinion, which was gradually won over to "civil service reform" on the plan of competitive examination.

Struggle for civil service reform.

147. The struggle, begun soon after the Civil War, still goes on. President Grant and his successor Hayes made earnest efforts to help to bring about the reform, but they were checkmated by Congress. The champions of reform did not allow themselves to lose heart. Many of them saw in it the germ of a veritable revolution in American public life: not only would favouritism make way for merit and public office cease to be an object of traffic, but the Executive, relieved from the pressure, henceforward without avail, of members of Congress, would recover its independence, while the legislature would be restored to its proper function; last, but not least, the Machines would no longer be able to subsist; there being no places to give away, there could be no "workers"; the bosses, being unable to support their men, would be deserted, and before long the tribe of mercenary politicians would perish from inanition; booty no longer being, because non-existent, the object of the organized parties, the latter would be able to revert to their proper mission, to reform on the footing of ideas and common principles.

There arose in different parts of the Union special associations of friends of the reform, who applied them-

Propaganda of voluntary associations.

selves to its propaganda. Federated soon afterwards into a League, these associations canvassed public opinion with remarkable perseverance and patience. The task was by no means easy, for the indifference of opinion was great; every one had got so accustomed to the spoils system that it was considered part of the natural order of things. It was almost the correct thing to turn the reform into ridicule. Objections of a serious kind, or considered as such, abounded: the reform tended to set up an insolent bureaucracy, an aristocracy of office-holders; it was an English importation; it was contrary to the democratic genius of the American people; it was destructive of the independence of the Executive and of its constitutional prerogatives; the system of examinations was pedantic and incapable of bringing out the merits of the candidates; the existing system was necessary for maintaining the cohesion of the parties, and without parties a popular government cannot exist, etc. Slowly, like the drops of water which wear away the stone, the apostles of "civil service reform" destroyed the common prejudices against it, they converted people one by one. The politicians paid attention to this movement, in their fashion, by inserting in the party platforms platonic declarations in its favour, without believing a word of them. The revolver shot of a disappointed office-seeker which killed President Garfield converted a number of people to "civil service reform." The members of Congress, however, were not among the converts. Nothing less than the serious defeat suffered by the Republican party at the Congressional elections of 1882 and the prospect of the accession to power of the Democrats who would divide among them-

selves the spoils were required to change the views of the Republican majority in Congress. Reinforced by a certain number of Democrats, that majority promptly passed the bill of Senator Pendleton, which in reality was the work of the Civil Service Reform League.

Civil service law of 1883.

148. This bill, which became law on the 16th of January, 1883, is the Magna Charta of civil service reform. It set up competitive examinations for admission into all branches of the executive civil service of the United States which have been "classified" for that purpose. While including in the "classified service" almost all the departments at Washington and post-offices and custom-houses with not less than 50 employees apiece, the law empowered the President to continue the "classification" of public offices,—that is to say, to extend the operation of the law to new branches of the executive civil service. Certain categories have been exempted from classification, particularly the most important ones, those which are filled up by the President under the Constitution with the confirmation of the Senate, and the posts which come at the other end of the hierarchical ladder, those of simple labourers or workmen. Classification is, in short, applied or applicable to the small employees only, such as clerks, etc. Besides, certain positions within the classified service may be excepted from the requirement of competitive examination by the rules which the President is empowered to make. The unclassified offices and those excepted by the President are filled up in the old way, while to the classified offices the chiefs can only appoint one out of three of the candidates certified to them as having passed the competitive examination heading the list in the

order of merit. Once appointed, they cannot be removed for political reasons; but the chiefs retain a discretionary power to dismiss their subordinates for reasons unconnected with politics. While forbidding the chiefs to put any political pressure on their subordinates, the law also prohibits them, as the reader is already aware, from soliciting or receiving from them contributions to the party funds.

How the law worked.

Attempts were made to evade or even to openly break its provisions; but, on the whole, the letter of the law has been obeyed. The same thing cannot be said of its spirit. The officials were no doubt appointed by competition, but they were often taken from among the adherents of the party in power. The abuses are disappearing more and more, thanks to the extreme vigilance of the civil service reform associations with their central League. These private organizations, whose propaganda had powerfully contributed to the passing of the law, now mount guard around it. The offices withdrawn from competition, and they include the most important, are still distributed as spoils. Such has been the case since 1883, under all the Presidents. The "clean sweep" was carried out as before, although confined to the posts "unprotected" by the law of 1883. Besides, promotion in the service is practically still free from any regulation and therefore still exposed to political influence. However, the atmosphere has become purer in the "non-classified" service too. Political assessments have gradually discontinued and have now become almost a matter of the past. Office-holders do contribute, but they are no longer coerced thereto. Yet their undue political

activity, although emphatically condemned by the law of 1883 and by the Executive instructions of Presidents Cleveland and Roosevelt, still goes on in a scandalous way. Paid out of the public treasury, the office-holders are really campaign managers of members of Congress and are chosen for political and not professional fitness.

Progress of the reform.

149. The effect of the bestowal in the old way of the non-competitive places and of partisan promotions within the classified service was attenuated by the steady extension of that service, which at the time of the enactment of the law, in 1883, included only 14,000 places. This extension was brought about partly in an automatic manner, in consequence of the development of the service which raised the number of the employees of an office to 50, and partly by presidential authority. Almost all the Presidents in succession after 1883, and especially Cleveland and Roosevelt, have enlarged the "classified" service. McKinley was the only president under whom the extension of the reform and even the sincere enforcement of the law met with a check. Towards the end of his second administration, in 1896, Cleveland "classified" more than 30,000 offices. During Roosevelt's administrations 32,000 offices have been transferred from the unclassified to the classified service. On the other hand the executive civil service has increased under him by more than 116,000 offices, of which over 80,600 came in the classified service in accordance with the law. The formal provisions of the law of 1883, completed by the successive extensions of the classified service, had brought into it about 220,000 offices out of over 350,000 which exist in the Federal service. The

number of non-classified offices now is about 130,500, of which about 8700 are "presidential" offices, filled with the confirmation of the Senate, and 22,000 "labourers" situations. Thus there is still left a field of pasture for the politicians.

Moreover, Federal offices form but a part of the fund of corruption; offices in the service of the States and of the municipalities, which afford an abundant supply of spoils, have been withdrawn to a slight extent only from the political plunderers. The competitive system, started in the Federal administration, for a long time had great difficulty in penetrating into the service of the States and of the cities, and still more in being honestly enforced. Two States only had promptly followed the example set by the Federal legislature, New York and Massachusetts. Within these last years only four other States adopted the reform, and in some cases only in limited application to certain areas or certain offices: Wisconsin, Illinois, Colorado, New Jersey. The competitive system has made more progress in the municipal sphere, where remedies for the rule of rings and bosses are such a crying necessity. The effect of the reform in the States and the cities varies a good deal, but generally it is much less thorough than in the Federal service. In some places the provisions enacted are a sham and their application is a farce, while in other places the rules work very well, perhaps better than in the Federal service.

Effects of the reform.

150. On the whole, to the limited extent in which it was applied, the reform yielded very good results. It procured more competent, more honest employees. Stability became almost the rule in the competitive

service, and in any event presented a singular contrast to the sweeping changes carried out in the "unprotected" service, namely, in the "excepted" positions, and still more in the "unclassified" offices. Complaints have often been heard, of late, about the inadequate efficiency of the reformed civil service: employees protected by law in their positions feel less responsibility and are inclined to form a red tape bureaucracy, while the chiefs are somewhat hampered in dismissing incompetent officials. From a general point of view, the political effects of the reform are not as yet very conspicuous; it has not killed the bosses and the Machines, for, if the supply of spoils has diminished, there is still enough left to inspire their henchmen with hopes and to make them "work." Moreover, the "classified" offices, taken out of politics, have been made up for by the very numerous offices recently created in consequence of the extraordinary development of government regulation, which is therefore much approved of by the politicians.

But, in any event, there is one effect produced by the movement for civil service reform which is a permanent gain, and that is the moral effect of the propaganda. After the Civil War, when public spirit seemed to be in a state of coma, when the political conscience of the community, engrossed in the mad pursuit of material prosperity, was, as it were, blunted or deadened, this movement against the spoils system rekindled the extinguished flame of the ideal in American public life; it stirred the choicer spirits to an outburst of generous revolt; it enlisted genuine devotion and unselfish ardour in a crusade to regenerate democracy. The civic enthusiasm which

animated the noblest and the most eminent of these men, like G. W. Curtis and Carl Schurz, — to mention the dead only, — spread to a number of young men now scattered all over the Union; it will not die out in them nor, in all probability, with them. There was formed in American society a sort of permanent fund of political righteousness from which high-minded men drew their moral supplies in every great crisis, in all the political struggles which filled these last forty years. The body of civil service reformers furnished large contingents of the mugwumps, the independents, and the municipal reformers.

Reducing election expenditure.

151. After the endeavours to starve the Machine by putting the public offices out of its reach, attempts were made to deprive it of another means of subsistence. The principal source of its influence was thought to lie in the fact that it had obtained possession of the material organization of the elections, which included especially the printing of the voting-papers and the distribution of them. The considerable outlay necessitated by all these operations, added to the varied expenses of the election campaign, raised election expenditure to such a point that it became impossible for a new party, and all the more for an independent candidate, if he was not very rich, to enter the lists. Again, the expenditure required gave the Machine a pretext for levying assessments on the candidates and an opportunity for obtaining enormous resources. Henry George, the author of "Progress and Poverty," summed up the situation in the following formula, "What we call Machine politics springs from the cost of elections." To checkmate the Machine the first thing to be done, therefore, was to reduce election expenditure.

Agitation for the Australian system.

The Australian system of secret voting, which has been adopted to prevent acts of intimidation and corruption, also provided for the public authorities preparing and distributing the voting-papers at the expense of the State. There lay the solution of their problem, thought the American "reformers," and they started a propaganda in favour of the adoption of the Australian system in its entirety. The Australian Ballot forthwith became a most dangerous rival of civil service reform, as a panacea for the evils which afflicted American political life. It would not only stop bribery and intimidation of the electors; it would deprive the Machine of a pretext for interfering with elections, for employing "workers," for levying assessments, and would strip its candidatures of their privileged character; the assent of the Machine would no longer be required for getting on the printed list; the State, which would henceforth make up this ballot, would enter every candidate on it, whether recommended by a party organization or not. The promoters of the reform succeeded in creating a genuine current of opinion in its favour, sermons were preached in the churches for the Australian Ballot, numerous petitions were addressed to the legislatures, and eventually the reformers succeeded in intimidating the politicians entrenched in those assemblies: against their will the latter introduced the Australian system. In a few years almost all the States of the Union adopted the Australian Ballot, or what was considered as such.

Official voting-papers introduced.

152. I have already explained, in the proper place, the economy of the system so far as it relates to the secrecy of the vote. The second part of the reform, which introduces the official voting-paper, organizes it

in the following manner. On the approach of an election the names of the candidates put forward are communicated, within the prescribed periods, to the public authority. The latter enters them on the list if the candidatures emanate from a more or less considerable group of electors. The law concedes this character in the first instance to the political parties, by admitting the candidates duly nominated in conventions or primaries and certified as such by the committee of the respective party. Every electoral group is considered as a political party for this purpose which has run candidates at the preceding election, and has, according to the legislation of most of the States, polled a certain minimum of votes, varying, with the States, from 10 to 1 per cent of the total number of the voters. The candidates of the less important "parties" or the independent candidates must, to be entered on the official ballot, be presented by a special petition or nomination paper signed by a certain number of electors. The printed copies of the lists of the candidates are handed on the polling-day to each elector by the election officers to serve as ballots; retiring forthwith into a booth or a compartment screened from observation, he marks on the list the candidates of his choice, and gives it back properly folded to be deposited in the ballot-box. The elector may not use other voting-papers than the official ones; but he is at liberty to vote for candidates not entered on the official ballot, by writing their names on his voting-paper (except in the State of Indiana).

The reform not quite successful.

153. The reform, so far as it aimed at depriving the Machine of its monopoly in elections, proved almost a failure; it even aggravated the situation. Election

expenditure is almost as high as before. The levy of the assessments goes on for the very simple reason that the candidates did not depend on the organization of the party for the distribution of the voting-papers only; they received from it their actual title of candidates of the party, which it could grant or refuse. Far from curtailing this arbitrary power, the Australian Ballot has unintentionally given it a legal sanction, by admitting party candidates only on a certificate of the committee of the organization. Again, by conceding the status of party to the great parties only, the law has placed them in a privileged position.

Independent candidatures handicapped.

The independent candidatures, which the law, according to the intention of its promoters, was to multiply, have now greater difficulty in arising, thanks to this very law, which requires them to be presented through petitions. A good many electors would have no objection to vote for an independent candidate, but they do not care to expose themselves. Moreover, the minimum of signatures required is often too high, and as the regular parties take care to make known their candidates at the last moment only, the independents have not sufficient time to get up the petition for bringing out their own candidates. Before the introduction of the Australian Ballot an independent candidature could arise at any moment and appeal for support without any preliminary condition.

Party columns and alphabetical arrangement.

The system of grouping the candidates is also prejudicial to the independent candidates. The laws of the different States provide two such systems: the one, commonly called the "Massachusetts ballot," arranges the candidates under the title of the office, all the candidates

without distinction in alphabetical order with mention of the parties which they represent. The second system groups the candidates in "party columns," each column containing the candidates of one party only, for every office voted for, at first the candidates of the regular parties and then behind them the other candidates. Neither system can really claim the title of Australian, as this latter system admits of no party designation on the ballot. Still the grouping of the candidates under the title of the office puts them all on a footing of equality, whereas in the second system the candidates of the parties are brought to the special notice of the electors. With the party column the elector is tempted, instead of discriminating between the candidates, instead of judging the men, to look at the label only, and the more so that the law relieves him of the obligation of marking the names one by one, enabling him to make a general mark, a cross in a small circle printed for this purpose above the title of the party, to show that he votes for the whole list of the party in a lump.

Difficulties increased by the blanket-ballot,

154. The large number of elective offices and of the candidates of different parties for each office, who are generally classified on a single voting-paper, makes the latter a document of such extraordinary dimensions that it has got the nickname of "blanket-ballot."[1] How can the elector examine such a list properly during the few minutes at his disposal for marking it, in the isolated compartment into which he withdraws with the paper that he has just received from the election board?

[1] I have in my possession a blanket-ballot of the State of Illinois of moderate dimensions, as it contains four columns only, whereas often there are twice as many; this voting-paper measures about 18 inches by 21, not including the margins, and contains 148 names.

Perplexed by the jumble of names and columns on the list, the elector is only too glad to get out of the maze as quickly as possible by putting a cross above one of the first columns. He need not even know how to read the title of the party, the law allows it to be designated by an emblem — an eagle, a cock, a star, a plough, a boat, etc.; all he has to do is to put his cross under this little picture. In many States no candidate's name must be mentioned in more than one party column, *i.e.* no party candidate may be endorsed by another party, with the result that the elector is not allowed to vote a "fusion ticket." Thus everything is combined to make the elector vote a "straight ticket."

and the prevention of a "split ticket."

The system of the alphabetical arrangement under the title of the offices is certainly more favourable to the voting of a " split ticket," but in many States in which that system obtained the politicians managed to have it replaced by the party column system, aggravated by the above-mentioned devices. When everything is said, the Australian Ballot, far from having destroyed the electoral monopoly of the Machine, has only consolidated it.

This singular result was due not only to the perverse ingenuity of the politicians, but also to the simple-mindedness of the reformers. The latter diagnosed the complaint in a somewhat rough-and-ready fashion, by dwelling on the external symptoms. The monopoly of the material organization of the elections which the Machine had assumed was not the cause, but the consequence, the accompaniment, of the moral electoral monopoly which it had acquired, of the power over men's minds which it had usurped under the mask of party

Short-sightedness of the reformers.

orthodoxy. The remedy prescribed for the disease presented a flagrant logical contradiction: to allow full scope to the independent candidatures and to the free expression of the suffrage they were submitted to a set of restrictive regulations; to stop the usurpation of the political parties legal recognition was obligingly conceded to them.

Regulation of the primaries by law,

155. However, the American legislature went still further. Since the State conferred the status of candidate on the persons chosen in the party primaries and conventions, was it not its duty to make sure that they were duly chosen and to subject for that purpose the procedure of the primaries and conventions to its supervision?

It had long been tempted to do so, and it had already taken several steps in this direction before the introduction of the Australian Ballot. The abuses and the scandals prevailing in the primaries and the conventions suggested the idea that the State, which surrounds the elections with so many precautions to ensure the free and truthful expression of the will of the electors, should grant the same protection to the voter in the preliminary, but not less important, stage of nominations to elective offices. After the war, when the abuses of the caucus grew intolerable, the legalization of the primaries came definitively before the public. It was discussed in the Press; prizes were offered for the best practical solution; it was brought before the legislative assemblies. But the legislature was at first somewhat slow in complying with the appeals addressed to it. To begin with, the politicians, who were by no means anxious to be placed under supervision, stifled the attempts at legislation. Again,

there arose the grave question of principle, whether the State had the right to regulate the sayings and doings of private individuals, forming free associations and assembling in more or less private meetings to perform acts which have no legal force, however great their political import may be. The legislature, therefore, simply offered the protection of the State to the party associations. The first laws on the subject, passed in 1866 in the State of California, and later in a few other States, while enacting copious provisions for ensuring regularity and honesty in the proceedings of the primaries or caucuses, left it to the party committees to decide whether their primaries should be held in accordance with the rules laid down by law. The practical effect of those optional statutes was *nil*. The party organizations, having the option of saddling themselves with the restrictions which they entailed, abstained from doing so. The failure of this legislation, coupled with the scandals which went on uninterruptedly in political life, drove a section of opinion into demanding more decisive intervention on the part of the State. The ever-increasing agitation in this direction has, in the course of the last thirty years, forced the legislatures of most of the States to adopt measures dealing with the primaries that were no longer optional, but compulsory.

at first optional,

then compulsory.

156. In complying with the demands of public opinion, the legislature proceeded step by step, conceding to it on each successive occasion more and more rigorous and comprehensive measures, and extending them, in a few States, gradually from the principal cities to larger areas. Some States, while still leaving the procedure of the caucus to the good-will and pleasure of the organi-

Varied extent of the regulation.

zations, penalized the acts of fraud and corruption committed at the primaries. Other States, and these the majority, went still further. They punish both acts of fraud and of bribery, and lay down more or less strict rules, of a mandatory character, for the procedure of the primaries, prescribing how and at what time the requisition convening the primaries is to be issued so as to ensure its being properly advertised, how the meeting is to be conducted, how the right of individuals to take part in a primary is to be ascertained, how the votes are to be received and counted. Some of these regulations are compulsory only in a few great cities and are optional in the other parts of the State, while in other States the law applies to the entire State. The provisions enacted in some States are scanty and of a general description, while in several others the rules are plentiful and go into great detail; their object is to leave the party organizations, and sometimes even the electors, as little discretion as possible.

By the close of the nineteenth century most of the large cities, with New York and Chicago at their head, were under the mandatory regulation of the primary laws, and the party was taken into the official machinery. The South with few exceptions remained free from that regulation, but the same end was achieved by party rules. North of the Mason and Dixon line the system continually spread and developed, bringing the primaries nearer and nearer to the system obtaining in elections. Gradually the expense of party primaries was devolved on the public treasury, the qualifications of the party voters were determined, a registration of party voters was established, and lastly the election of party offi-

cials, of party committees, was regulated by the law. In the States provided with stringent regulations the public authority almost completely steps into the shoes of the parties, as regards the conduct of the primaries, and becomes, in a way, a party manager, while the old character of the primaries, as deliberative assemblies of the party, is officially obliterated; it is one election the more added to those which existed under the Constitution.

How successful.

157. The experience has not altogether fulfilled the hopes which were entertained of these laws. The good citizens were expected henceforth to exhibit a greater interest in the primaries now that they were protected by law, and that each citizen could be sure that his voice would not be drowned in these meetings, that his vote would not be made away with, etc. In reality nothing of the kind occurred; with a few variations the primaries remained in the hands of the politicians. The abuses which tainted the procedure of the primaries have been remedied in a very moderate degree only. For, however minute the regulations laid down by the law may be, the observance of them always depends on the party committees and the election "judges" or "inspectors" who are appointed or suggested by these committees.

The difficulty of who is entitled to vote.

Besides, and this is a crucial point, the rules embodied in the laws referred to provide no real solution for the preliminary question on which the character of the primaries, as meetings really representative of the party, depends — namely, who is entitled to vote in the primaries. Most of the laws referred to have been obliged to leave, either expressly or by implication, to the party committees the determination of the qualifi-

cations required; that is to say, to let this great instrument of oppression remain in their hands. In many States a definite test for participation in primaries has been attempted: the voter must swear that he did not vote against the party's regular candidates at the last election, or that he did vote for them and intends to support the nominees of the convention (not yet chosen !) at the ensuing election, or that he is in general sympathy with the principles of the party and that it is his intention to support generally at the next election the nominees of the party for State and national offices. These tests, far from guaranteeing the rights of the elector, constitute an infringement of his political liberty: they not only ask him to disclose how he has voted at the last election, but prevent him from cooperating with the party of his choice, if he has changed his opinions since that election. No great improvement upon such enactments are those which content themselves with requiring the voter to be "in sympathy with the aims and objects of the party" or to declare himself "in good faith" a member of the party. The sanction of the oath applied to intentions and feelings, even if it were justified in law and in politics, cannot be effective. The law has not been able, and never will be able, to prevent with certainty the undue exclusion or admission of citizens into the counsels of the party, for the peremptory reason that party membership, like Church membership, does not admit of regulation by an outside authority. This membership is, by its very nature, based solely on the conformity of feelings existing between the member and the body.

158. The legislation protecting the primaries, with

all its minute precautions, could not, of course, be more successful in putting an end to the intrigues and manœuvres which get ready the vote in the primaries. The "slate," which is made up behind the scenes, and which predetermines the result of the primaries to such a large extent, is inevitably beyond the reach of the legislature. The law has been able to lay hand only on the outside apparatus of the primaries, and it can only effectively protect the externals, the publicity and the good order of their meetings and of the vote-taking, and, at most, it can also protect the honesty of the vote against corruption, so far as that is possible by law. In short, the law has only been able to apply to the primaries the police supervision, which is the sum total of the State's power over members of organizations, whether of a religious, political, or any other kind. Even from this point of view the results obtained have not been of great importance. The frauds committed in the primaries usually remain unpunished, in spite of the law, which is not sufficiently supported by public opinion. The latter's wrath, if aroused by the misdeeds in the primaries, is never of long duration.

Inability to grapple with the "slate,"

with the frauds.

It was mentioned in one of the early chapters that the regulation of the primaries had been extended to the conventions. To prevent arbitrary proceedings in these assemblies the law has, in some dozen States, prescribed provisions regarding the date of the conventions, the call of the convention to order, the election of the officers by roll call, the nomination of the candidates in the same way or by secret ballot. In a few States the law tried to control even the vote of the delegates,

Regulation of conventions.

requiring them to vote for the candidates named as such in the primaries. The instructions, which the delegates sometimes receive from the primaries, have been made a legal obligation. That was a step towards the legal attribution of the nominating power to the people themselves.

Movement for direct nominations.

159. Towards this ultimate goal an immense agitation rapidly set in all over the country. Just as once the democratic passions of the people were roused against the Congressional caucus, so now they were turned against the convention system. All the evils of the political régime were declared to proceed from the convention, which had come between the people and its representatives. It was of no avail to purify the primaries, to protect by law their proceedings so long as they led only to a convention, inevitably manipulated by bosses and rings of professional politicians, irremediably permeated by intrigue and corruption. Away therefore with the delegates, who can never be trusted, and back to the people! The American government being a government by party, party government must be made responsible to the people. The control of the nominating machinery of the parties, usurped by bosses and corporations, must be restored to the people, with the help of the strong arm of the State, by conferring on the people assembled in party meetings the nominations for all elective offices and the choice of party officers according to the regulations of the law.

The scheme of direct nominations, apart from legal regulation, was not a new one. It was started about forty years ago in Pennsylvania, in the county of Craw-

ford, whence it got its name of Crawford county system. It was used for a time somewhere in the West, but it was especially in the Southern States that it found a lasting abode. The direct nominations have been extensively applied in the South not only to small areas but, as in South Carolina, to the choice of candidates for the whole State. The working of the system had established a moderately successful record, when at the beginning of this century the movement against the Machine and for wider democracy grasped at direct nominations as a universal cure for political evils. The stimulus given to the public mind by the exposures and the moral upheaval referred to manifested itself with a particular force in the agitation for direct and legal primaries. This reform would at last allow the people to express its will; the individual voter would get a direct voice in party affairs and, conscious of his new opportunities, would no longer keep aloof. Candidates would look for and get their nomination from the people and not from the bosses; so the latter would get out of business. Any candidate, without asking permission of the Machine, might solicit the popular choice, and men of independent mind would then come forward. The elective officers would become more independent of those who could control their action for their selfish advantages. While aimed at the Machines, the direct nominations would not destroy the party system. On the contrary they would strengthen and purify party.

Legal direct primaries.

160. The bosses vociferously denounced the reform. But there were and still are many very serious objections from quarters which have nothing in common with

the Machines. The popular hatred of bosses proved stronger, and in a very few years the direct nominations reform, beginning with Minnesota in 1901, conquered the States of the Mississippi Valley and of the Pacific coast and lastly a few States in the East. Of long standing in the Southern States, direct nominations are still determined there by party rules, *i.e.* are voluntary, while elsewhere they are established by legal enactments. These latter, at first optional, in many cases, like the laws regulating the primaries under the convention system, very soon assumed mandatory form. The areas and the offices to which they apply vary greatly. As I have mentioned in the sixth chapter, the choice of presidential electors and delegates to the National Conventions is generally excepted from the direct primaries. Many offices less important, many local and school offices, are frequently also excepted. On the other hand the direct primaries have been invested with the selection of candidates for offices which, according to the Constitution, are not in the gift of the people, *viz.* the United States Senators, who are appointed by the State legislatures. In some sixteen States the law has introduced the direct nomination of Senators by means of a party plebiscite taken at the primaries: the name of the candidate receiving the highest number of popular votes is brought to the notice of the legislature, which is thus urged to vote for the people's choice. Sometimes the legislature obeys; sometimes not.

Procedure in direct primaries.

The voting in the direct primaries is fixed almost on the same lines as for elections. Official ballots only are used. The candidates voted for are generally put

on the ballot by petitions of a certain percentage of party voters. The qualifications of the voters are determined as in the first legal enactments of the ante-direct primaries period. In some States a formal declaration of party allegiance is accepted, or a test of party standing for the last preceding period is required; in others a preliminary enrolment of party members is necessary like the registration of electors. In the last case only the enrolled members of the party are admitted to the primaries, called therefore "closed primaries." In other States members of all parties are jointly admitted to the primaries, where they are given, as at elections, a blanket-ballot with party-columns, which they mark in secret, or separate ballots of the several parties to make a choice between them, or again they have to declare openly which party ballot they desire to vote for. All these primaries of members of all parties are called "open primaries." In any case the voter must vote a straight ticket, with secrecy of his vote secured under one method and denied under the other method. The voting of a split ticket is entirely out of the question.

Usually a simple plurality is required for being nominated, so that the choice of a minority of the party may get in. To prevent it, the law of one State (Washington) provides that the voter may indicate in his ballot along with his first choice for the office a second choice, and that the candidate who has got a majority from the combined votes of first choice and of second choice will be the nominee.

161. The experience of this system has not been long, still its tendencies are already manifesting them-

Tendencies of the new system.

selves. Neither the sanguine hopes of the reformers nor the fears of the bosses have been entirely justified. The participation of voters in the primaries has decidedly increased, but on the whole their indifference is still exceedingly great. Frauds are not prevented by the new system. Many bad candidates are defeated who would be nominated in convention, but the haphazard vote of the multitude rejects good men against whom a convention would not dare to come out. The voter having to rely on himself under the new system naturally cannot make his mind up as to the qualifications of the several candidates. There is therefore a good deal of haphazard voting. In many places preprimary caucuses have already sprung up to control the voters in the primaries. As a rule the Machine still makes up the slate. But there is one chance more than before for breaking it; the voter need not wait till election and bolt the ticket. There is much more publicity about the candidates. When there is an important issue and public opinion is roused, the electorate has greater facilities to express and to assert its will, but when there is no excitement the Machine pulls the wires as before, with this difference, that it can no longer be taken to task for bad nominations, — the people are supposed to have made them. The necessity of applying for nomination to the people, in every corner of the district or even of the State, requires from the candidate an immense amount of campaigning. That stirs up a good deal of bitter feeling within the party and is fraught with heavy expense. It is no longer necessary to buy the delegates, but there is much more to be spent on other objects, on hiring workers,

on "buying space" in the papers, etc. The poor man stands little chance, if any. On the other hand the candidate must now face the people, come out in the open and enlighten the electorate upon his views on the issues of the hour, with the result that the campaign acquires an educational value. However, the sincere expression of the people's will is not always secured in the party primaries: not unfrequently Democrats take part in nominating Republican candidates and *vice versa*, in order to shuffle the cards of their opponents, to have a rival candidate nominated who will court defeat; or the worst elements of both parties sincerely join hands to get in a Machine rascal. And there is no means to prevent it except by holding "closed primaries" and admitting to them only members of the party registered as such a good time in advance. Even that gives no security, as experience has shown. In any case the safeguard of the secrecy of the vote is done away with, while on the other hand honest men who wear no party collar or who have conscientiously changed recently their party affiliation, all these citizens, who are the salt of the electorate, are debarred from the selection of candidates, only to leave the field to the party bigots and to the party sharpers.

These unsatisfactory results of the "direct primaries" cannot be considered as accidental. Confronted with the old system of parties and the new centrifugal tendencies of independence, the reform endeavoured to uphold both — a contention which implied a contradiction in terms. To achieve its object, the reform invoked the coercive force of the law, requiring it to do what is not in its power to do. To give legal protection to the

several parties, first of all a legal test of party membership is necessary. But from the very nature of party allegiance no such test, no workable one, can be fixed by law, as has been shown from the very beginning, when the State started to regulate the primaries under the convention system. Again to secure for the individual voter the free expression of his will, the reform caused the law to deprive him of the safeguard of the secret ballot and to rivet him to the straight ticket.

Still the direct nominations, even loaded with the incongruities of the legal regulation of parties, are likely to do service in the fight against the Machine. Not only is the agitation connected with that reform and imbued with a craving for righteousness helpful in purifying the political atmosphere, but the weapon forged may in some cases, when there is a strong determination to use it, be handled with success.

Scheme of "free nominations."

162. Of a much sounder conception is the plan of "free nominations," which aims not only at eliminating the conventions, but at dispensing with the party primaries themselves. According to this scheme all the candidates should be nominated directly "by petitions" without any reference to parties. Any group of citizens would put forward its candidate on equal terms with any other, and the candidate would rely only on his merit and on the support of the citizens who had given him their signatures. This method has been used with great effect in the famous mayoralty campaign of 1897, in New York, for nominating Mr. Seth Low. Since then the law has sanctioned such a system of nominations in a few Western States for school officers or city officers. I have characterized this scheme

as a sounder one than the "direct primaries," because it is more alive to the actual conditions, which are no longer identified with stereotyped party divisions and are marked by a continuous growth of independence. The problem of the hour is how to smooth the evolution from the old system which, even if doomed, cannot be ended by fiat, to the new tendencies which are imperiously breaking through. Parties, provided with a good organization, might adapt themselves easily to the new method, while independents will get from it all facilities for asserting, for developing themselves, and will be placed, not in theory only, on a footing of equality.

A most important step towards the legal regulation of nominations on a non-partisan basis has been recently taken in Iowa and in Massachusetts by establishing in certain municipalities, for city elections, non-partisan primaries, to which all voters are convened to select candidates without distinction of party. The two candidates for office who have received the highest number of votes at the primary are declared candidates to be voted for at the final election, and no other candidates are admitted. Here again candidates of organized parties are not excluded, while the electorate is allowed to make a free and an intelligent selection.[1]

Non-partisan primaries.

[1] In 1909 the State of Nebraska enacted a law providing for the non-partisan nomination (and election) of judges and superintendents of public instruction. Candidates for these offices are to be nominated by petition only and voted for on an "official non-partisan ballot," without any party name or designation to be given to any candidate.

A still more important legislative event is announced (Nov. 1909): The people of Boston have adopted the revised city charter which provides among other things for the abolition of party nominations and of

The writer has advocated reform on similar lines [1] and he will develop his plan with greater detail in the concluding chapter of this book.

The old convention system has still defenders among the reformers themselves. Many of them cannot see how the multitude thrown upon itself can make sensible nominations. Not despairing of conventions, they would improve them by several devices, such as legal regulation, representation of minorities, subdivision of the electoral areas for the selection of delegates into small units permitting of neighbourly meetings of the electors.

"Direct legislation" movement.

163. The discontent with the representative system in the party Organization has spread very rapidly to the representative system of government in general. The notion has got abroad that representative government has proved a failure. The cure of more democracy applied only to the nominating system appeared to many to be inadequate. The power must be restored to the people in the domain of legislation. The best, in fact the only remedy against the evils of the party system and political corruption will be found in "direct legislation" by means of the Referendum and the Initiative as in Switzerland. This reform, advocated by only a few till the last decade, has since become very popular and is making progress not only in pub-

nominating caucuses or primaries for municipal offices. Candidates are presented by petitions signed by at least five thousand registered voters not for the sake of nomination but directly for the election, and their names are printed on the official ballot without any party designation or mark.

[1] See his work *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties*, 1902. Vol. II, pp. 614, 691–694.

lic discussion but in legislation. Apart from the old constitutional principle which required that the new constitutions or the constitutional amendments should be submitted to the people, the Referendum has been already established in many States, chiefly with regard to local matters in cities or parts of the State. Within recent years the Referendum in municipal matters has spread to about twenty States; and at last, in some four or five Western States and one New England State, it has been extended to statutory law, so that, with a few exceptions, any law voted by the legislature may be referred to the people. The Referendum goes in those States together with the Initiative. In some States, like Oregon, they have been extensively made use of, apparently with success, while in others the people do not manifest great eagerness or much intelligence in voting on the measures submitted. Whatever may be the influence of the Referendum in establishing political purity, it would certainly, if systematically used, play havoc with parties and party organizations, as the popular vote displays a tendency to move across party lines.

In addition to the Referendum and the Initiative, a third measure is usually advocated by the champions of control by the people — the *recall* of the elective officers by the people before the expiration of their term. The recall has been adopted in a number of cities in the West. Upon a petition of a specified percentage of the qualified voters the seat of the impugned official is vacated and a new election is ordered, at which he may be again a candidate. The law has already been successfully tried in a few cases. Recall.

Popular election of Senators.

In the eyes of many reformers the crucial reform for the purification of political life lies in the election of the United States Senators by the people. This object has been pursued for a long time through amendments to the Constitution brought before Congress. But the United States Senate has always rejected them. Within the last decade an indirect way has been attempted to reach the same goal. State laws have been enacted establishing a popular vote on United States Senators, the result of which should be accepted by the legislatures as a mandate. The reader is already aware that in the direct primaries, whether established by law or by party rules, the parties usually nominate United States Senators. In a few States the people vote at elections on the official ballot for United States Senators, just as they vote for the Governor. But that vote is as void of legal power as the nomination in the primaries: it is not legally binding on the legislature.

Regulation of campaign funds.

Great stress has been laid within the last few years on the limitation of contributions to campaign funds, which supply the Machines with a very large part of their war-chest. Mention has already been made of the laws enacted prohibiting contributions by corporations. Then there have been steps taken to get the legitimate election expenses paid from the public treasury. The numerous recent laws against corrupt practices have also been alluded to.

Schemes of municipal reform.

164. While attempts were thus being made to purify the springs of political life by legislative reforms, other efforts were brought to bear directly on some of the departments of public life which were most corrupt.

The crying abuses in the municipal sphere appeared to call strongly for special legislative remedies. The first thorough investigation of the question, made in 1877 by a special legislative commission of the State of New York, reached the conclusion that manhood suffrage was the source of the evil, that a municipality is in no way a political body, but a business organization with the duty of administering the property of the community, like a joint-stock company which runs a private concern, and that consequently the municipal shareholders, the ratepayers of the city, ought alone to choose its administrators, to the exclusion of those citizens who, not paying any municipal rates, and not feeling the effects of extravagant or untrustworthy management, have no interest in electing honest and competent administrators.

Restriction of the suffrage.

This proposed solution of the problem was not a fortunate one. The exclusion of the poor from the franchise in municipal matters, which affect certainly the interests of all the citizens without exception, was not only unjust but missed the point: the incapable or dishonest administrators are not elected exclusively by the votes of the non-ratepayers; the latter only make up the total of the parties among which the "better element" is distributed. It is the division into political parties in the sphere of municipal affairs, with which politics has no concern, that enables the bad candidates to go in under the party flag. If, instead of fighting one another like the Blues and the Greens of the Roman circus, these "good" citizens united to demand only ability and honesty from the municipal candidates, those who

have none would not be able to get in. In any case in a country of manhood suffrage the restriction of the municipal franchise could not be favourably received. So the plan fell through.

"Municipal dictator" plan.

165. Then, despairing under existing conditions of getting a better class of members for the city councils, the reformers tried to obviate the effects of their mischievous activity by cutting down their jurisdiction and their powers. In return, the powers of the mayor were enhanced to such an extent as to make him deliberately a "municipal dictator": he was in no way accountable to the council, he could appoint and dismiss the chief municipal officers at his pleasure, he exercised a right of veto over the decisions of the council in the extremely limited sphere of authority that was left to it. Responsibility, when divided among the members of the council, the mayor, and numerous committees or officials, had been practically non-existent. When laid on the mayor, chosen directly by the people, it would become a reality, argued the reformers; knowing whom to call to account in case of bad government, the people could strike directly at the culprit; in committing supreme power into the hands of one man, the people would be obliged to be careful in the choice of that man, and they could be so more readily than when they had to elect a more or less numerous assembly.

This system of municipal organization, inaugurated about the years 1882–1885 in Brooklyn, Boston, and New York, was soon introduced into several other cities. It was received with marked favour; it was supposed to provide a specific against municipal disorders. However, the "municipal dictator" system

was far from yielding the desired results. Sometimes it brought into power superior men, sometimes politicians of the worst stamp; sometimes it started a sort of municipal revival, at other times it perpetuated the old abuses. The basic idea of the system was stretched too far. Responsibility and absolute concentration of powers do not necessarily go hand in hand. The government of cities by municipal councils and their committees is in no way unsound in itself; the example of Europe proves exactly the contrary. The direct responsibility to the people of a man invested by them with supreme power cannot be enforced while he is in power. To be real and effective, responsibility must be continuous and unceasing; and this is possible only under the régime of representative assemblies, under the system of control which they ensure. Since the city elections were fought as before on party lines, the remedy of the autocratic mayor system made even worse the old evil: by bestowing power on a single individual, it afforded greater facility for prostituting that power to the interests of the party whenever the mayor was inclined that way, and party organizations were impelled to greater activity to control the office which carried a larger booty. Reducing the powers of the city councils to a cipher, the new system made the electors take still less interest in the composition of these assemblies, and tended to take away the last vestige of responsibility from the members of the councils, degraded by the law itself. The municipal dictator system offered but one unquestionable result, a very appreciable one in the eyes of so many American citizens: it saved them the trouble of governing themselves, and

gave them the illusion of having found an effective mode of government which worked of itself.

Further curtailment of the powers of the city councils.

166. The curtailment of the powers of the city councils gradually extended to one branch after another. In several cities the councils were shorn not only of their administrative prerogatives, but they were limited in their so-called legislative ones — in the right of organizing the administration, of making regulations, and lastly even their budgetary powers were abridged. Again in several cities certain elective offices have been more and more changed into appointive offices filled up by the mayor or by the heads of departments. At the same time there has been developing a tendency to introduce into municipal government a system of administrative control. In one very remarkable case a still more radical remedy has been applied: in the city of Washington elective government has been completely abolished. After the excesses of Boss Shepherd's régime, Congress — which exercises direct powers over the administration of the Federal capital made into a neutral district — did away with elective government and put in its place three commissioners, to be appointed by itself.

Municipal "government by commission."

Evidently, this régime could not be introduced elsewhere, in the States which are self-governing. However, there is developing in the latter a system of municipal government which comes rather near to the city of Washington régime. That is the "government by commission," which dispenses entirely with city councils and invests with full powers, legislative and administrative, a few commissioners. But these commissioners are elected by the city at large, and one of them is the mayor. This system, which origi-

nated in Galveston, Texas, is becoming quite fashionable. It is expected to remedy the diffusion of responsibility which afflicts the American city government and to secure real responsibility and efficiency in the administration. The system is spreading in the West, combined sometimes, as in Iowa (the Des Moines plan), with the recently introduced forms of popular control: the ordinances of the commissioners may be referred to the people for its veto; the recall may be demanded against a commissioner; all franchises are submitted to the vote of the people. Most of the objections against the mayor as "municipal dictator" apply to the "government by commission," with the addition of a few more, such as regarding the danger of concentrating in the hands of the commissioners the power of both making ordinances and of executing them; of imposing taxes, appropriating moneys and of spending them.

Separation from party politics.

167. The Des Moines plan provides for the nomination of the commissioners in non-partisan primaries, already mentioned, with a view to the divorce of municipal government from party politics. For the same object, which has for long preoccupied many reformers, enactments have been secured (in New York even through the constitution) providing that the municipal elections should take place at a different time from State and Federal elections. It was hoped that the elector, having to vote for none but municipal candidates, would choose them with perfect freedom, heeding only the interests of the city and with no fear of endangering the interests of the party in Congress or at the presidential election, which would not be at stake just then. This material separation of the municipal elections from the

others was a little helpful, though the average party voter continued to vote the party ticket thrust upon him by the Machine as before. The benefit of this reform has been, however, largely annulled by the direct primaries legislation, which requires all the candidates, the candidates at city elections not excepted, to be nominated on party tickets.

General survey of the municipal reform movement.

The various reforms essayed in municipal organization have, undoubtedly, afforded a partial or temporary alleviation of the evil; but, taken as a whole, the municipal problem still remains unsolved. The reformers expended the best of their energy in recasting or reconstructing the machinery of municipal government; they thought the evil was due mainly to structural imperfections, — while the real crux lay in the motive power of the machinery and in the methods by which it was set in motion, in the enslavement of the municipal voters to the notion of party "regularity," in the monopolizing of municipal life by the political parties and by those who exploited these latter. The legislative reformers were not entirely unmindful of this aspect of the case, but they attached much more importance to the machinery. Believing in the efficacy of machinery, they expected to obtain the maximum of effect by straining it to the utmost, and they indulged in conceptions which were as one-sided in principle as they were summary in execution: the mayor had not sufficient power in municipal government, he was made a dictator; the municipal council managed the property of the city badly, it was bound hand and foot or even entirely abolished. The public, again, whose attention was attracted by these legislative ex-

periments, was lulled by the assurance that a remedy had been discovered and the evil averted.

Measures aiming at legislatures.

168. Besides municipal government, legislative reform grappled with the disease of political corruption in another special sphere — in the legislative assemblies of the States, sunk to the last depths of public contempt. Their improvement being considered hopeless, attempts were made, as in the case of the city councils, and with even more method, to limit their powers, to leave them as few opportunities of legislating as possible. With this object the reformers tried to insert in the constitutions — which the ordinary legislatures have not the right to touch — as many general provisions as possible, so much so that the most recent constitutions, made very voluminous, contain many clauses which do not fall within the scope of constitutional law, properly so called, at all, but relate to private, to administrative law. To bring legislation into harmony with the changing requirements of life, frequent revisions of the constitution are preferred to trusting the members of the legislatures. Among the decisions which must be left to the latter, several have to be submitted, under the new constitutions, to popular approval, to the electors of the State or of the part of the State concerned. This plan is being adopted, to an increasing extent, in the case of loans, of extensive public works, etc. The recent development of the Referendum and the Initiative impairs still more the power of the legislatures. Lastly, to diminish the opportunities of the State legislatures for mischievous action, attempts have been made to shorten the duration of their labours by the constitutional limitation of the term of the legislative sessions,

and especially by the introduction, already carried out in most of the States, of biennial sessions.

169. In addition to the schemes reviewed, to which the legislature has given recognition in a larger or a smaller degree, a great number of other plans have been put forward for purifying public life and for destroying the Machine. If the caucus and the Machine are still standing, the fault is assuredly not due to any lack of ingenuity on the part of the would-be reformers. I can only refer briefly here to the more important of these proposals.

Plans of reform of the electoral system.

Several publicists devoted all their attention to the improvement of the system of elections, apart from the Australian Ballot movement. According to them, it was the imperfection of the electoral system which had given rise to the caucus with all its attendant evils. Without local organization enabling the citizens to deliberate, the vote is only a delusion and a snare, and the citizen, even if he have a hundred votes, will be only a dummy. The Germanic folkmoot, the Saxon hundred, the town-meeting of New England, provided this organization. We must go back to them, said these reformers, by basing the electoral system on districts of one hundred to three hundred electors, who can come together without difficulty. These small constituencies will choose the members of all the legislative assemblies by means of elections at several degrees. The elective method will be reduced to a minimum; there will be no more periodical elections; the term of office will no longer be limited; the members of the assemblies will remain in office *quoad bene se gesserint;* but each member can always be removed by the as-

sembly of his division. Likewise the heads of the executive at different grades will be elected by assemblies of delegates emanating from the small, local meetings of the citizens and will be subject to removal. The members of Congress and the President of the United States should be removable by Congress. Popular election will take place only to fill up vacancies. All holders of a public mandate will be protected from the tyranny of party and will serve the people only. Personal merit and character will become their sole qualifications. Individual responsibility for individual acts, the absence of which is the crying defect of the present system, will be ensured. Others combine this reform with the introduction of direct legislation by the people, of the Referendum, and of proportional representation. This scheme will bring about the fundamental reform demanded by American political life — the re-establishment of the close contact between the individual citizen and the agent whom he chooses to manage his public affairs.

Proportional representation.

170. Others again lay great stress on the representation of minorities or proportional representation. It is the system of the majority vote which has warped and degraded representative government and has enabled low politicians to monopolize it. The independent elector not being able to make himself heard in the councils of the nation, one of two things inevitably happens: the elector whose vote is practically nullified loses heart, holds aloof; or he accepts, in despair, the candidates of the caucus of his party solely in order not to separate from the majority and not to let the candidates of the opposite party get in. It is this state of

things, brought about by the existing electoral system, which the caucus exploits and on which it lives. The majority has a monopoly of the representation, and the caucus has a monopoly of the majority. Once adopt proportional representation, and the electors will no longer be forced to choose between the two candidatures, both equally odious. Large bodies of electors will fall away from the two great organizations and will reduce them to simple political groups within the nation. In a word, the caucus, now the arch-monopolist, would have to submit to the law of competition. The representation of minorities has obtained a partial application in the States of Illinois and Pennsylvania, though without producing perceptible changes in political life. The failure is attributed to the defective character of the special form of minority representation adopted in those States.

Compulsory vote.

The indifference usually displayed by the "good" citizens towards the public interest has suggested the idea of the compulsory vote, and even of the compulsory acceptance of elective office.

Ministers in Congress.

Others hold that the evil is due not so much to the electoral system as to the organization of the public powers, to the separation of the legislature and the executive. Under the present régime the first is without guidance and the second without force. The remedy lies in the establishment of closer relations between the two by the admission of the representatives of the executive into the assemblies, — as in the parliamentary régime, minus the responsibility of the Cabinet, — and by increasing the powers of the executive.

For fulness' sake should be mentioned the demand

for woman suffrage, which could not fail to purify political life. Woman suffrage.

Having set out in quest of remedies for the abuses engendered or fostered by the caucus, and having, as it were, gone over the whole field of American political life, the reformers appear to have reached the end, if not the object, of their search. After accompanying them to this extreme point, we can at last pause in the already lengthy investigation of the party system which we have patiently pursued throughout the past and the present career of American democracy. A final survey will enable us to collect and fix in the mind the general impressions conveyed by the multiplicity and variety of the phenomena that have come under our notice.

SIXTEENTH CHAPTER

SUMMARY

Balance-sheet of the party Organization.

171. THE eclipse of the old ruling class, which became final after the first quarter of last century, appeared to leave the ordinary citizen in possession of the field. To secure the full enjoyment of his rights over the commonwealth, and to facilitate the discharge of his political duties, — which were growing more and more complicated through the extension of the democratic principle to its furthest limits, and more and more burdensome owing to the great economic expansion which absorbed every energy, — the citizen accepted the services of the party Organization formed on the representative method.

This extra-constitutional Organization assumed then a twofold function in the economy of the new political system. In its first task, that of upholding the paramount power of the citizen, the Organization failed miserably. In the second, that of ensuring the daily working of the complicated machinery of democratic government, it achieved a relative success. The government rested almost entirely on the elective system, nearly all the office-holders were elected, and the shortness of their terms of office made it necessary to replace them very frequently. How could the citizen, if left to himself, have grappled with this onerous

task, which consisted in filling up such a number of places, and which was continually recurring? The system of nominating conventions, established on the basis of party, provided a way out of the difficulty. By preparing the election business beforehand, by putting it cut and dried before the elector, the party Organization enabled the citizens to discharge their duty in an automatic way, and thus kept the government machine constantly going. Far from being embarrassed by the growing number of the electors, the party Organization made room for them, installed them in the State. In the case of electors of foreign extraction it did more; it was the first to assimilate the immigrants from the four quarters of the globe with the American population; by sweeping them, almost on their arrival, into its net, it forthwith made these aliens sharers in the struggles and the passions which were agitating the country in which they had just landed. It brought together and sorted, well or ill, all the elements of the political community, but in the end everything found its place and settled down.

This result, a very important one, was obtained at a very high price. The party system has seriously weakened the citizen's hold on the government, diminished the efficacy of the machinery of government provided by the Constitution, and has hampered the living forces which are its real motive powers.

The Executive damaged

172. The Executive was the first to feel the effects of the new system. The convention movement claimed to infuse fresh vigour into the Presidency by withdrawing it from the intrigues of aristocratic cliques, such as the Congressional caucus, and by making it emanate directly

from the people. But the new system has left the people only a choice between two candidatures, settled beforehand by professional politicians. Having made itself the real bestower of the candidatures and sole election campaign master, the party Organization laid hold of the Presidency. The President ceased to be head of the nation, and became head of a party, and even less than that — trustee of its Organization, which cared above all for the loaves and fishes of the patronage entrusted to him by the Constitution. Chief of the executive responsible for the enforcement of the laws, he no longer had the choice of his agents. Associated with the legislative power, he could no longer treat on equal terms with that power, which was his co-ordinate under the Constitution, but became his superior through the party system. He could obtain its co-operation only by currying favour with it, by sacrificing the independence of his office. The rare attempts at resistance offered to Congress by some Presidents, perhaps enhanced the reputation of the man (as in the case of Cleveland), but did not restore the strength of the office.

in spite of the increase of its powers.

True, the President has, on the other hand, gained considerable strength, since the Civil War. Thus the extension of the Federal power, which has increased and is still increasing by leaps and bounds, naturally carried with it the development of executive functions, of those of the President. Then another power, higher than the Federal power — public opinion — became more assertive owing to better means for its expression and for its focussing through the Press and the telegraph; and its most authoritative interpreter all over the country proved again the President, the most conspicuous officer of the

Union, the only one who by virtue of his very position can speak single-mouthed for the whole nation, of which he is supposed to be the direct choice. From that vantage ground he could, if a man of character, more boldly face Congress, use more freely his constitutional weapons of the veto, and even lead against a recalcitrant Congress the big battalions of public opinion, if he succeeded in rousing it. But in ordinary circumstances and under Presidents of average personal power the executive remains as handicapped by constitutional limitations and party conditions as before, both in the legislative sphere and in the exercise of his appointing and treaty-making power. A President who is a strong man after his own fashion may use against an unwilling Congress strong language, if he has a gift for it, but he will not be in any better position for that.

The Senate deteriorated.

173. While the President's great rival, the United States Senate, has gained in power, it has at the same time deteriorated in character under the conditions developed by the party system. Rather low at certain periods, much higher at others, owing to the change of its *personnel*, the Senate at its best no longer has any resemblance to that august assembly which provoked the admiration of the Tocquevilles. There is a good deal of ability in the latter-day Senate, but it is only business ability. There is many a member of keen mind, but it is rarely a statesman's mind. At the utmost the Senate is a good working machine for dispatching routine legislative business. It is not a place to look for broad views and large conceptions of national policy. In that grand assembly of the commonwealths of the nation there is no *public* spirit. It is rather a great

The fortress of plutocrats and bosses,

national 'change with numerous "corners," as in Wall Street — for steel, for wool, for lumber, for oil and so on, with astute managers and shrewd attorneys for all these special interests which are in need of legislation or of preventing legislation. Bargaining, trading is their object, and traders' methods are their methods. "Legislation is managed on the principle of give and take, each interest exacting conditions as the price of its support, and blocking action until satisfied."

Successful merchants, corporation lawyers of ability, and expert party bosses, of whom the larger part of the Senate is made up, are all the product of that alliance, which developed so to speak under the eyes of the reader, between the party machine and the money interest. Here in the Senate of the United States that alliance is crowned; here it finds its most salient expression and reaches its highest efficiency. They may be seen here in flesh and blood united and inseparable as they are in the whole field of public and economic life. And at the same time, as it were for the convenience of the survey, each has there its separate specimens of crack wire-pullers on the one hand and millionaires on the other. The claim to the United States Senatorship being founded as a rule not on national eminence but on the support of the State Machine, every Senator has more or less to be not a master statesman, but a master of "practical politics." In the States ruled by the bosses it is the State boss in person. If he wants to go into the Senate, he has but to hold up his hand, and the most eminent competitor will be sacrificed without further ado even though he be of the stamp of Webster or Clay. The rich men buy a seat in the Senate from the

party Organization for cash with little disguise. There are now perhaps fewer of them in the Senate than was the case a decade ago, but still they form about a sixth of the membership.

Of course, steel and lumber are not the only subjects the Senate deals with, and there are Senators besides the representatives of special interests and the multi-millionaires, but, with few exceptions (fortunately increasing), they are wheeled into line, if not by bargains and deals, by party discipline and the timid or reactionary mind of their set. They are under the sway of the spirit of privilege and cowardly conservatism which wealth and party Organization breathe and with which they infect the surrounding atmosphere. Honestly and conscientiously they help to prevent legislation breaking new ground, especially on lines of economic or social progress. They go ahead only when it comes to spending, to squandering the national resources; they outrun in financial extravagance the popular branch of Congress. After a due balance has been assigned to the motives of this and of that section of the Senate, on the whole the impression it gives so frequently of a commercial oligarchy at the head of the government is far from being unfounded.

and of reaction.

174. On that oligarchy there is no check laid by the popular Chamber representing directly the sovereignty of the people. The Senate has subjugated the House of Representatives, again largely through party conditions. The Senators disposing of Federal patronage are the supreme masters of the party Organization in their respective States, and the members of the House of Representatives who depend on that Organization for their political life must be agreeable

Keeps in subjection the House of Representatives.

to their Senators. Without their good-will the Congressmen would get no appointment to offices for supporters in their districts; against the Senators' will they could not be renominated; without their assistance they would not be able to have even the legislative measures for their constituencies passed, the last word in Congressional legislation belonging practically to the Senate. Swaying the Representatives from the vantage-ground of party, the Senate has developed and accentuated the subjection of the House by its legislative usurpations. It has nullified the initiative in regard to finance reserved by the Constitution to the popular branch of Congress. By its right of amendment, of which it has made an improper use, and by systematic obstruction, consisting in keeping the bills passed by the House hung up in committee, the Senate has brought the House to do its will. And the House cannot make a successful stand against the upper chamber precisely owing to the personal dependence of the Representatives on the Senators as their party chieftains. Thus the Senate, having become the focus of the party Organization and the stronghold of the most important economic interests of the country, could with impunity encroach both on the province of the Executive and on that of the House of Representatives. Party conditions have placed the Senators in a sort of ambush from which they can hit everybody without being struck themselves, and have made the Senate the foremost organ of the extra-constitutional government of the United States.[1]

[1] This condition in no way contradicts the fact that the Senate by itself is a constitutional body. As soon as a constitutional body

175. Vassals of the Senators, the Representatives are in their own House slaves of the party organization. The lack of any co-ordinating organ under the separation of powers established by the Constitution, the dispersal of the legislative business among an immense number of committees and sub-committees, and the obstructive tactics of minority groups, for party mischief if not for the benefit of private interests, have cried for concentration. Stringent rules curtailing debates, binding the members hand and foot, were enacted, and the Speaker was given autocratic powers for running the House in good order. A ruling clique with that officer at its head, established under the authority of the predominant party and by means of the party caucus, reduced the members to servitude. The House ceased to be a deliberative assembly and became a ratifying body for confirming the decrees of the few leaders of the House "organization." There is seldom any real discussion; when speeches are made they are chiefly "for Buncombe." There is no field for statesmanship. Even opportunities of more modest range are suppressed. A member may be in the House for ten years and not be allowed to speak, if he does not bow to the "organization" and does not make beforehand arrangements with the Speaker in his private room for being "recognized" by him. The feeling of responsibility, of self-respect, inevitably slackens. Even when big men, the members can have only small

The House enslaved to its "organization."

assumes functions which are not assigned to it by the constitution, either expressly or by implication, it acts in an extra-constitutional way, and if it does so systematically it becomes a regular extra-constitutional organ in so far as it so acts.

ambitions. For that reason alone their caliber cannot be very high.

Contributory causes to the degradation of the House.

But there are other contributory causes: the men who find their way into the House are those who have succeeded in "getting the delegates," or in ingratiating themselves with the Machine or the boss. Their political methods have consequently been formed by the practice of petty expedients, of combinations and compromises on individuals and interests, of "deals." The custom which confines the choice of candidates to local residents narrows still more the supply of men of higher character. Thus it is only natural that in the upshot the seats in the House of Representatives are occupied by a good number of mediocrities or, at all events, by average men. However, there are not entirely lacking men of ability and high character, but they have no chance, they are handicapped by the autocratic régime of the House; so they strive to be transferred to the Senate and they deplete the House of its best talent.

Power of special interests in the House.

176. The integrity of the members is not of a low standard — there is scarcely any corruption, — but advantage is taken of them by the party discipline which makes them vote with their eyes shut. The vested interests are not so fully represented in the House as in the Senate, there may be not much more than one-third of the membership representing special interests, but the corporations sway the House of Representatives all the same through the "organization" and the caucus. Nay, the Speaker himself may be indebted for his chair to the support of a powerful Trust, the Steel Trust or some other. Deformed by so many depress-

ing influences, the members of the House are not more representative of the best public opinion than the Senate, though elected directly by the people, and they display the same reactionary *stand-pat* tendencies, so far as they dare. An imperious and sometimes wrathful call of opinion is necessary to wring from them measures of national welfare stirring up the stagnant waters of public life. They prefer the dull but quiet existence filled up by sending to their farmer-constituents packets of seed (distributed at national expense), by providing their "workers" with offices, and by appropriating in cash as much as possible for their districts. The cynical remark of the French minister of some years ago, which became famous, "*Regardez à vos circonscriptions*," finds here the most complete and matter-of-fact application.

Local interests paramount.

An annual grab is performed by the members of the House, upon the log-rolling system, till recently in the form of "omnibus" bills on River and Harbour, and now chiefly on Public Buildings appropriations. Millions and millions are voted without discussion. The feeling of responsibility to the country is obliterated. The member will be tested at home by "what has he done for his district?" The affairs of districts, the local affairs indeed take up most of the time of the House, with the result that an enormous quantity of legislative acts are turned out every session,[1] and so far the "legislative mill," as the House has been aptly called, with its masterful managers, foremen old in

[1] The output is continually increasing: in the 57th Congress 2781 measures were passed, in the 58th 4041, in the 59th 6940, in the 60th 9711.

service and docile hands, works smoothly under the orderly despotism by which it is ruled. That despotism of party, crude and undisguised, is the salient feature which the working of the House brings out, just as the Senate embodies the other aspect of the American government — the plutocratic sway over public affairs. Like any despotism, that obtaining in the House is tempered by rebellions — against the Speaker and the Organization — which have become a little more frequent in these later days, but so far show only the beginnings of achievement.

Decline of the legislatures

177. The State legislatures exhibit in a still greater degree the decline, one would be almost entitled to say the collapse, of representative government. The function which the Constitution of the Union has assigned them in the Federal sphere, by entrusting them with the election of the Senators of the United States, is too frequently prostituted to the bosses and to millionaires or to special interests, so that there is now a cry in the land, becoming louder and louder, to take away from the legislatures the selection of Senators. Nor do these assemblies represent the people better in the sphere of the local interests of the State. The finances are administered without regard to economy; the waste of the public resources is an ever-present and growing evil. The laws are made with singular incompetence and carelessness. Their number is excessive, running into volumes each session; but they are mostly laws of local or private interest. The motives which enter into the making of these laws are often of an obviously mercenary nature. In many legislatures there is a "lobby," which buys legislation and wields such a

powerful influence that it has earned the name of "third house." In the States ruled by the Machine the majority of the members of the legislature are simply tools of the boss, and at his behest they grant to the rich industrial or financial companies all sorts of "franchises," of fiscal privileges. There is a good number of respectable men in the legislatures even of those States. And it may be that most of the members of the legislatures, as I have been frequently enough assured, are not so much wicked as narrow-minded, ignorant, and weak, pliable men. Evidently the groove of the party Organization is on the whole incapable of turning out men of a different stamp.

and of the municipal assemblies.

The municipal assemblies are often no better off than the legislatures: filled with "boodle aldermen," they indulge in the same practices, and with the same disastrous results for the public purse. What bribery leaves undone, is achieved by incompetence and wasteful habits. Dealing as it does with the greater part of the American population, and affecting its most important economic interests, the administration of the cities exhibits the most complete failure of elective government in the United States.

The judiciary affected.

178. The judicial power has been more spared than the others: from a feeling of self-preservation the political society of America tried to withdraw the law courts from the régime of party; yet they did not entirely escape its dissolvent action. The functions of Federal judges and law officers, whom the President appoints, and the State judicial offices, also filled in certain States by the Executive, without being distributed on the spoils system in all its rigour, were pretty often be-

stowed as a reward on men who had earned the gratitude of the party Organization, or who were backed up by it. With the judiciary elected by the people that is almost the rule. Introduced into the United States through democratic fanaticism, this system was developed under the impulse given by the caucus in need of elective offices for running its concern. Being subject to election, the judges had to court the favour of political parties, to ingratiate themselves with the Machines and the bosses. The natural result was a lowering of the moral and intellectual standard of the bench, although the pressure of public opinion prevented it from being filled with notoriously undeserving men. If the integrity of the judges is, in the main, fairly satisfactory, their independence is not intact in cases where the interests of the party are involved. In the administration of criminal justice that independence scarcely exists at all among the police magistrates in the large cities and, especially, the public prosecutors; elected under the auspices of the Machine, they become its humble servants and arrest the arm of the law in order to shield its protégés. In matters pertaining to industrial relations and conflicts with labour the independence of the judiciary has likewise been challenged for some time. The elective judges themselves — frequently chosen, under the influence exerted by the money power on party organizations, from men of a reactionary mind — are considered not responsive enough to public opinion.

The spring of government weakened.

179. Thus, the spring of government is weakened or warped everywhere. We have followed the manifold and varied and often desperate attempts at

making up for the inadequacy or the irregularity of governmental action. We have seen protection by the law and protection against the law bought from disreputable go-betweens. Private associations, law enforcement societies, law and order leagues, and others, were founded to bring the transgressors of the law to justice; they organized their police, their detectives, for the purpose of exposing the evil-doers. In the largest cities of the New World private initiative has had to step in to get the streets cleansed and to discharge other duties which devolve on the municipal administration in a well-ordered community. Even in the rural districts the village improvement societies often perform the same task. To obtain more durable and more regular effects than could be achieved by these spasmodic efforts, attempts were made to straighten the relaxed governmental spring by main force: inadequacy of action being mistaken for inadequacy of powers, the latter were concentrated in the hands of a few persons; dictators were created, from the Speaker of the House of Representatives down to the mayors of cities; the bounds of State authority were widened.

The legislative power decried.

Again, the failure of elective government having shown itself most conspicuously in the legislative assemblies, the public turned wrathfully upon them. When modern society came into possession of liberty over a century ago, it had placed its fondest hopes in parliaments; it had looked on them as the palladium of freedom, as the safest refuge for regenerated humanity against the "tyrants." Bitterly disappointed by experience, the political society of America beat the idol and abruptly set up the executive power again, no

Exaltation of the Executive.

longer seeing in it the oppressor, but hoping to find in it a tribune of the people: the President of the United States was expected to neutralize the mischievous action of Congress; the Governor was given the right of veto over legislation in many States where the Executive did not enjoy this prerogative, and, indeed, there are now left only two such States; mayors were invested with extraordinary powers at the expense of the municipal assemblies, or these latter have even been entirely suppressed under the "commission plan." At the same time, the State tried to strengthen the neglected public weal by a remarkable development of regulation, of the "police power of government."

Direct government demanded.

180. On the other hand, despairing of its representatives, the people endeavoured to do without them on as many occasions as possible; not being able to trust any one, it took into its own hands duties which are the attribute of representative government: many subjects of ordinary legislation were withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the legislatures and transferred to the category of constitutional laws, on which the people at large decide without appeal. Lastly "the failure of representative government" has been accepted as an axiom, and a movement is now in progress for establishing in its stead the direct government of the people. It is to be introduced all round, in the constitutional government through the Referendum, the Initiative, and the Recall; in the extra-constitutional government, in the party system, through the direct primaries. The party system as well would be regenerated by the suppression of the representative principle. Away with the go-betweens, let the people rule.

Habit of local self-government relaxed.

Whether or not the people can and will be entrusted with direct government to such an extent, its ability and its habit of handling public affairs have already been impaired by the very system of party which is to be regenerated. Local self-government, which in Anglo-Saxon communities had, from time immemorial so to speak, set in motion the whole political machinery, has subsided under the action of the caucus. In its anxiety for the spoils of presidential patronage, it has subordinated all the elections, from those of the township up, to the presidential election. By thus centralizing, in spite of their diversity, the aims and objects pursued at the various points of the political circumference, the caucus régime undermined State and local autonomy, and made the electors lose their interest in local public life.

Centralizing tendencies of the party system not an unmixed evil.

It might doubtless be pointed out that by making all the electoral issues turn on national problems the caucus helped to bring about that beneficial process which made a nation of the United States. Indeed it cannot be denied that the party system has contributed to this result, along with many other factors, such as the outcome of the Civil War, the economic revolution, the railroad and the telegraph, which have lessened distances and blended the whole population in common interests and common passions. But there remains none the less the fact that with that wholesome centralization, the caucus has, on the other hand, brought about a harmful centralization, which by stifling self-regulated local life and by enfeebling men's initiative and volition dries up the sap of a political community and preys upon the very roots of its existence.

"Party government" not secured.

181. If the heavy sacrifices made to party interest at every point of the constitutional sphere could be justified by the necessity of securing at all hazards the benefits of "party government," supposed to be alone capable of supplying the framework for government by public opinion, the sacrifices have been made almost in vain: there has been and there is in the United States no "party government" in the real sense. True, the discovery was made some ten years ago that though the United States government has been deprived of the benefits of the English form of party government working through the Cabinet, American political genius has largely supplied the deficiency. The Constitution has set off the powers of government against one another by a system of checks and balances; the party Organization has resumed the scattered powers, brought them into harmonious co-operation, especially the executive and the legislative branches. And that was the result not of fortunate circumstances but, it seems, of deliberate effort: "party Organization was devised" to meet "the need of means of concentration so as to establish a control over the divided powers of government." This theory appeared alluring enough to be adopted by some writers of prominence and expanded, in certain cases, with brilliancy of literary style. It has, however, one defect: it is not borne out by the facts.

Recent theory on the harmonizing power of party

not borne out by the facts

To begin with, one is reminded that from almost the very period when the party Organization was so thoughtfully "devised," from the retirement of Jackson down to the advent to power of McKinley (apart from the period of the Civil War and of the Reconstruc-

tion, when the South was not represented or not normally represented in Congress), there has not been a single instance of the President and the majority of the two Houses being of the same party throughout the presidential term. In one or other House, if not in both, the majority has belonged to the party opposed to the President, at least during the second half of each presidential administration, after the biennial renewal of the House of Representatives, which has almost invariably broken up the majority of the President's party. in national politics

Since McKinley's era the Executive and the majority in both Houses have belonged to the same party, the Republican party, but what were the relations between them, particularly during the most brilliant period of the Republican ascendency under Mr. Roosevelt's administrations? Congress did its best to thwart the President's policies, and the President did his utmost to discredit Congress before the country. Opposed by the Senators and Congressmen of his own party, Mr. Roosevelt sought and received the help of Democrats. He was powerful enough to thrust on the party his favourite candidate for successor, but the party Organization did not on that account come forth with unity of purpose. Two separate canvasses were conducted and both separately financed — one for the President who was to continue Mr. Roosevelt's policy, the other for the members of Congress in hostility to that policy, and both were successful at the polls. Mr. Taft pledged himself to a revision of the Tariff downwards, and so did the platform adopted by the Republican National Convention. An extra session of Congress was con-

vened for that object. But Congress, in alliance with the money interest, revised the Tariff upwards. The feeble attempts made in the House of Representatives to placate the consumer oppressed by the Protectionist tariff for the benefit of the manufacturers, were suppressed by the Senate. The discipline of party was used to give a lie to the party platform, and in addition votes of Democratic Senators won over to Protection have been secured. The President found himself helpless, all his influence backed by public opinion succeeded only in wringing from Congress a few concessions in the interest of that outcast, the consumer.

182. When all these facts recurring again and again are reviewed, one wonders what has become of that harmonizing power of party organization securing "organic co-operation," which looms so large in the eye of the exponents of the theory in question? Or perhaps, does it obtain more successfully in the smaller area of State government where the conflicting interests of a lesser magnitude are more easily bridged over? But what do we find in the State of New York, for instance? There the people have triumphantly elected and re-elected a Republican governor of great prominence, Mr. Hughes, and on the same ticket with him a Republican legislature. Is not then harmonious co-operation between them secured in advance? As a matter of fact, they are both at loggerheads; the Republican governor on the one hand and the members of the Republican majority in the legislature on the other are stumping the State to denounce each other's wickedness.

nor in State government.

This utter impotence of party organization to har-

monize the separated powers of government is natural enough. The American government was not intended at all to be a party government; the Fathers dreaded party and took precautions against its getting hold of the constitutional fabric, by building barriers between the several branches of government. However, parties arose, owing at first to fundamental divergences of opinion on the Constitution, to grave national problems afterwards, and became perpetuated chiefly through combinations of selfish interests. The adaptation of the party system thus created to the constitutional framework proved difficult, at least for the sake of good government, and failed in the long run. It may be questioned whether the framers of the Constitution have always built wisely, but it cannot be denied that, with very few exceptions, they built strongly. The constitutional partitions erected by them have proved till this day too solid, too high, not only to be removed, but even to be lowered. The party system perhaps might still have succeeded but for the make-up of the parties themselves and for the elements of their motive power.

The constitutional arrangements not favourable to party government;

183. Party government, as it has worked out in England, presupposes two great national organizations, each presenting a body of men with a single mind and a single heart throbbing in uniform aspirations over the whole field of political life, subordinating every individual will and might to the common aim; and, in possession of that force, eager and able to undertake the solution of any national problem. Now, the American party Organization did not bring into Congress, except in times of crises, such

American political conditions unpropitious.

majorities, guided by the general interest, united by principles and common aims which reflected the national conscience. Viewed as a whole, the great parties have been throughout their career nothing but agglomerations artificially brought together and kept together — except the original Republican party, the party of Lincoln, called into existence by a single problem, which sharply divided the public mind. A party, as a rule, represented merely a sign which covered sometimes profounder divergences of view and more bitter factional struggles than those differentiating it from the opposite party. The membership of a party was brought together most frequently by a common desire to get out of politics "what there was in it" for the benefit of the Organization or of the allied special interests. To preserve the external unity of the party, that is to say, the name and style under which it conducted its operations, the Organization was always trying to hush up the gravest problems, "to agree to disagree," to "stand pat," to juggle with principles and programmes. The parties were in consequence incapable of initiative or responsibility, they could not put forward measures of national import or display constructive statesmanship. Long and high-sounding platforms were good only for catching votes. Political action was determined more often than not by the balance of conflicting private interests connected with or represented by the parties.

No homogeneous majorities.

How could in such conditions a party system communicate to the separate organs of government that unity of purpose and of will springing from moral consciousness in which it was itself lacking? How could

it encompass them all in a common responsibility, and enforce it? Ignoring principles, it had no general and rational criterion to apply to the conduct of the men whom it had brought into office. Absorbed in its selfish purposes, it lacked moral authority and moral stimulus. The eclectic mind of the exponents of the above-mentioned theory has very well grasped this situation. They say themselves: "Party organization undertakes to supervise the conduct of legislative bodies only so far as party interests distinctly require." And what are party interests? To this the same writers reply: "Since party lacks a true representative character, and its concern in public affairs is at bottom a business pursuit carried on for personal gain and emolument, the service which party performs in executing the behests of public opinion and in carrying on political development must be an incident of its ordinary activity." Finally the same writers allow themselves to admit: "And yet at the best the control which party exercises over government is uncertain. . . . Government is still in solution, and nothing may come to crystallization."

No opposition.

184. Again, the second condition of party government requiring that there should be two parties balancing one another, checking themselves reciprocally and always ready to alternate at the helm of the State, has been very imperfectly if at all realized in the American Union, while for many years it has simply not existed. There is no longer in Congress any Opposition in the parliamentary sense. Party divisions have been practically reduced to a difference in titles and to the distinction of "ins" and "outs." The party out of

power, the Democratic party, is utterly demoralized and absolutely incapable of serving as a counterpoise. Many Democratic Senators and Congressmen give their votes to the dominant party for a plate of lentils. The only sincere and consistent opposition comes from within the majority party, from a handful of courageous men branded as "insurgents." The see-saw by which the party system is supposed to ensure good government, or at least supply a temporary remedy for misgovernment, is arrested, and the very *raison d'être* of party government is destroyed.

Party discipline in Congress.

At the same time the disciplining power of party is felt in Congress only too much, but not as a national force; it is only a domestic power within each Chamber, handled by the caucus or its masters, for wheeling into line the members, especially those of the majority party, for the particular business of the House or for the special interests which are swaying it. Without that they could not achieve much in the scramble for good things on which they are bent; the lowest company of freebooters must submit to discipline. The party discipline which prevails in the national Capitol serves only to run one or other House of Congress but not the government of the country. It does not prevent at all one House running against the other and both against the Executive, though all three profess the same party faith. The harmony between the separated organs of government, so far as it obtains, is secured as a matter of fact by private, nay secret understandings, "deals," and bargains, and, in important cases, by the pressure of public opinion. This latter, following the lead of the President, or act-

ing spontaneously, comes out, however spasmodically, not for party but to coerce party, to defeat selfish party organization unwilling or slow to carry out its will.

In the upshot the "party government" obtaining in the United States is nothing but a pretence; real party government working regularly has been made impossible there both for constitutional and political reasons: the constitutional partitions between the organs of government are too high, and party is too low. Party is reduced to the level of an electoral contrivance, to manage the elections and to win their prizes.

Contribution of party to the decay of leadership.

185. This state of things will appear still more evident if we enquire more closely into what has become of the element which, under representative government combined with the party system, constitutes its moving power — political leadership. Real leadership can be obtained in a political community only on four essential conditions: the men capable of exercising the leadership must have easy access to public life; these men who are allowed political influence must assume the responsibility attaching to it; for this responsibility to be a reality it must be enforced by proper control; to be efficacious the action of the leaders must be sure of continuity. Now, under the caucus régime, ideas, convictions, character, alike disqualify a man for public life; they make him, to use the regular expression, "unavailable." The party Organization always gives the preference to colourless, weak, easily managed men. In any event its assent, its visa, is required for entering public life. And if men, even the most distinguished, aspired to lead from outside the ranks of officialism, they would again be stopped by the caucus régime,

unless content to act through the Press. If, in theory, the first duty of a leader consists in giving his adherents ideas, his first and only duty, in the United States, is to give them places. To be able to bestow these he must have some sort of hold over the party machinery. One is therefore in a vicious circle.

Unfavourable social conditions.

The social conditions of American life aggravate the situation. The steady growth of the large cities and the social and economic differentiation at work in them prevent men capable of leading from making themselves known and from getting accepted over the heads of the politicians. The levelling spirit with which the American appears to be imbued does not, again, create an atmosphere very favourable to the development of leadership. It would, no doubt, be rash to maintain that natural superiority, such as springs from character and intelligence, is disregarded in the United States; it is just as much appreciated there as anywhere else. But the Americans are in no way a "deferential people, politically deferential," after the heart of the Bagehots. Even deference in general — except to women — is much less developed among them than in the communities of the Old World, steeped in hierarchical traditions. Moreover, the natural leaders, of whom American society has a potential supply, abstain from assuming political leadership; they shirk the service of the commonwealth from selfish motives.

Leaders shirk responsibility.

186. Again, the men who have entered the official sphere of public life shrink from asserting their political individuality there; they have not the courage of their convictions, if they possess any; they avoid taking up a decided line in the clash of opinion; they are always

"non-committal," for fear of compromising themselves and from a wish to be "safe." The unreasoning discipline of party, and the innumerable concessions and humiliations through which it drags every aspirant to a public post, have enfeebled the will of men in politics, have destroyed their courage and independence of mind, and almost obliterated their dignity as human beings.[1] The sign of the party is their conscience, when there are no powerful private interests that have precedence; the waves of popular feeling are their compass. Along the whole line, public life evolves leaders who do not lead, who deliberately put in practice the well-known saying: "I am their leader, I must follow them."

Responsibility not enforced.

The public man loses heart and shirks responsibility all the more readily that there is hardly any one to keep him up to the mark. The party committees do not care much about the doings of the representatives provided they do not kick against the party and the Organization. The public pays still less attention to them. The citizen who has been wrought into a paroxysm of excitement by the elections sinks into apathy immediately afterwards, and takes no interest in the way in which his representatives discharge their trust. Again, the seats are held for a short time, two years or one. If the member has not justified the confidence of the electors, the remedy lies ready to hand: his term will come to an end very shortly; is it worth while to arraign him and to lose

[1] A story, probably invented, but characteristic, is related of a Senator of the United States, who was told by the leaders of the party Organization of his State, that it was time for him, now that he was a Senator, to do the correct thing as regards his family life and get married. The new Senator declared that if the members of the committee agreed upon a lady, he would marry her.

through him one's peace of mind and, above all, one's time, of which one never has too much for one's business? It follows that the citizen is not angry enough with the wrongdoers and does not sufficiently appreciate the well-doers. It follows again that if the former easily escape deserved reprobation, the latter find it difficult to come out of the ruck and to command acceptance as guides and leaders.

Leadership not sure of continuity.

In addition to this, the general rule does not allow of continuity in the public service. Exceptions apart, prominent public men are sent back into private life when they are still in their prime and in full possession of their powers. The principle of rotation in office, the impossibility of entering or re-entering public life save by the narrow and single door of the constituency of residence, the necessity and the difficulty of keeping in the good graces of the local organization of the party, and, also, the competition of more lucrative private callings, are all so many reasons which militate against a man holding a public position for long. With his official rank a man loses all political influence; he is invariably "side-tracked," as the saying goes. No one pays any more attention to him, even if he has filled a post as exalted as the Presidency of the Republic. In the great majority of cases his political opinions would not carry much weight, and his personal recommendations still less; he could not, unless on good terms with the local Machine, get a village postmaster appointed. This is at least as true of the men who have filled less important positions; their authority has been reduced by the caucus régime in a still more palpable way to the power of providing the loaves and fishes.

Thus, under the action of which the party régime was the principal instrument, the race of leaders has decayed in the political society of America.

Political formalism developed by party.

187. Party has not achieved more success in its fundamental duty, which consists in organizing public opinion, in giving it expression. The caucus has rather deformed it by forcing it into the groove of the stereotyped parties. The convention of "regular" candidatures has made external conformity the sole criterion which dispensed with private judgment and individual responsibility. Henceforth even a "yellow dog" had to be voted for, once he was put on the party ticket. The ticket could not be meddled with on pain of sacrilege, the party had become an object of fetich worship; the man who diverged from his party was a "kicker," a sort of public malefactor, whereas he who followed the party with his eyes shut was a "patriotic citizen." The fear of not being regular, of appearing heterodox and schismatical, developed in the citizen that deference to the world's opinion, that fatalistic submission which makes a man lose himself in the crowd in a humble and even cowardly fashion. Civic courage shrivelled up in this atmosphere like a body exposed to the cold. No one ventured to raise his voice and protest loud enough. Even the victims of the pirates of the Machine, the gagged representatives of the people, the companies blackmailed by the bosses, preferred to submit and hold their peace, rather than appeal to the public. The interest which they believed they had in holding aloof, their selfish cowardice, found an excuse in the exigencies of party. Respect for the convention of party, for form, was too strong even for citizens of perfectly independent means and

Political cowardice.

unimpeachable honesty; their party loyalty inspired them with infinite indulgence for those pirates who chose to hoist the party flag. Acquiescence in abuses, tolerance of political corruption, spread like a noxious vapour.

Political formalism soon led from tolerance of the evil to connivance at it. "Regularity" being the first consideration, and the triumph of the ticket being the supreme object, the means necessary to compass that object were of no consequence, the end justified them; and electoral corruption took root and spread with the connivance and the pecuniary assistance of citizens who in their private life were incapable of the slightest impropriety.

Party organization as a cement and a brake for the new nation.

188. But has not this political formalism, which curbed the individual, cemented the edifice of the American Republic, and has it not preserved that edifice from the storms and tempests which a democracy, essentially unstable, is supposed to be so prone to let loose? Has it not prevented the overflow of popular passion, caprice, and infatuation by conducting all the currents of political feeling into the bed of organized parties, and by keeping there, through the discipline which it maintained, the various elements borne along with them? When one thinks of this political community of the United States, young, exuberant, composed of incongruous elements, almost without a past, with no traditions, with more will and ardour than ballast, a society representing in truth a world in a state of ebullition, it is impossible to gainsay the regulating function which party discipline must have discharged there and the services which it must have rendered.

It is impossible not to admit that this discipline has been one of the factors of the moral force which brought and kept together the populations of the New World with a power much greater than that of the brute force which founded the empires of the Old World.

Proved also a reactionary force.

Yet if party Organization served in the American Republic as a brake, it proved also, and above all, a reactionary force. Having repressed the individual too much, it shackled the public mind, and all the more effectively that its free play was already restricted by the mercantile spirit of the nation and by the written instrument of the Constitution. A commercial community is, by its nature, more prone to conservatism than is expedient for its proper development. The American Constitution, in its turn, put a premium on immobility in the social and political spheres. Its framers, full of distrust of the people and anxious to keep advanced democracy out of power, had, by the innumerable precautions which they introduced, made all constitutional change extremely difficult. Political changes proposed for the remedy of crying evils, such as were disclosed, for instance, by the method in force for the election of the President, for the choice of the presidential electors, or of the United States Senators, have not been able to pass in spite of efforts repeatedly made throughout a whole century.

Prevented free play of the public mind.

189. To immobility of political forms in the State the stereotyped party Organization tended to add immobility of mind in political society. To preserve its fabric, the Organization was always trying to prevent the new currents of public feeling from gathering volume and flowing into fresh channels. For more than twenty

years before the Civil War, it prevented the slavery question from being openly raised and honestly examined. After the war, it juggled with the financial question; it kept alive for years together, simply for the requirements of its business, the rancour of old animosities and the fear of past dangers; or again, enforced the maintenance of an ultra-Protectionism, in spite of the secret convictions of many of its members, by means of party discipline and by the purchase of votes with the "fat" provided by the manufacturers. Party formalism thus puts obstacles in the path of progress and creates dangers to the healthy development of political life, the gravity of which increases in proportion as the nation grows older; it is paving the way for a reaction in an anti-conservative direction, of which the politico-social movements in recent years, such as Populism, "Bryanism," Socialism, are warnings resembling the mutterings of a coming storm.

Set up a factitious opinion.

While usually keeping opinion, by main force so to speak, within the old grooves, the party Organization at other times drove it as violently into new courses full of dangers, when it saw any profit therein for itself. Thus, within recent time, we have seen the Democratic Organization take up on its own account the cause of the Silverites and deliver to them the party bound hand and foot, and a number of Democrats fall into line solely out of deference to "regularity." The wild schemes of the champions of free coinage thus appeared to be more strongly supported by public opinion than they were in reality.

In this way there came to be established a difference between public opinion and the opinion of the

parties, which should be but the mirror of the former. To assert itself, the real, the independent opinion had to rise in revolt. It could not, however, do so, except in an intermittent fashion. Confined by the Organization like a river between banks of sand, opinion must be lashed into a storm of anger to break through these embankments. Mad with rage, it rises up to wreak vengeance. Yet the power that opinion exerts on such occasions is a power of repression only. The preventive power, which is the highest expression — the ideal, if the word is preferred — of free communities, is debarred from asserting itself: the all-engrossing desire to make money aiding and abetting, political formalism lulls the ceaseless vigilance on which that power rests.

Repressive and preventive power of opinion.

190. Thus the caucus régime has not allowed party to discharge any of its legitimate functions, either in the constitutional or in the extra-constitutional sphere. By reducing party to an instrument of organization pure and simple, the caucus left it no end to serve but itself. Pope's famous definition of party — "The madness of the many for the gain of the few" — received a most humiliating application in the spoils system. To humiliation was added ignominy, when the party Organization brought in the moneyed men among those "few." It smoothed the path for what is called plutocracy.

Party promoted the advent of plutocracy.

The mere fact of the existence of large fortunes concentrated in a few hands is of itself a source of permanent demoralization in society: it belittles unassuming and honest work; it gives the rein to desires and appetites; it makes the pursuit of wealth the highest aim, the ideal of life, and drives all other aspirations out of

the human mind. One knows how rapid and enormous has been the concentration of capital in the United States since the Civil War.[1] But the realization of these colossal fortunes and fabulous incomes was not, and could not be, due solely to the free play of natural forces. More often than not this free play has been perverted for the benefit of the corporations by the complaisance or by the connivance of the public authorities. From the municipal franchises up to the ultra-Protectionist customs tariff, the authorities surrendered to a few what belonged to all. The corporations bought legislation, "protection," and favours of every kind, wholesale and retail; rich men bought seats in the highest legislative assembly more or less disguisedly, obtained seats in the Cabinet, ambassadorships. It seemed as if nothing could resist the well-filled purse; money became king in the Republic to such an extent as to suggest the well-known saying recorded by Sallust : *Urbs venalis et mature peritura, si emptorem invenerit.* Jugurtha's remark, although based on experience, was nevertheless an exaggeration, as the Numidian eventually learned to his cost. Members of a degenerate ruling class, high dignitaries of State, nay, even tribunes of the people might be bought; but how was it possible to buy the people itself, a whole sovereign people? Party Organization in the United States supplied the answer: all the corrupters who try to bend the power of the State to their own selfish ends have but to identify their interests with those of the party Organization which is conscience-keeper to the members of the

[1] Before the war there were not more than three millionaires in the whole Union; at the present day there are many thousands.

sovereign demos; they have only to become its financial supporters. It is in this way that the party Organization has served as a lever to all great private interests in their designs on the public weal, which have assumed so many aspects in the last forty years, and especially to the Protectionist tariff, this arch-corrupter of the Republic. Without that intermediary the Protectionists, the several corporations and the other more or less fraudulent recipients of political favours could not have attained the object of their desires; they could not have got the better either of the electoral body, the great majority of whom are certainly honest, or even of their representatives, who are very far from being all venal. The reader will remember the remark of the New York legislator: "I want to be honest, and I am honest; but I am the slave of the Organization."

Economic effects of the money power apprehended first.

191. The people apprehended the problem of the money power mainly in its economic aspect of accumulation of wealth, which strikes the imagination more easily, and set themselves down as the victims of a frightful economic oppression. In reality it was not so much as taxpayers and consumers that they were the victims of capitalists, the gigantic concentration of industry enabled a few men to grow rich by an infinitesimal illicit toll on each member of the community at large. In any event, people did not sufficiently realize the fact, at least till most recent times, that the economic monopolists were supported and helped up by the political monopolists, by the holders of the electoral monopoly which the people themselves had handed over to the party Organization. With childlike rage they fastened violently on the external effect without scrutinizing its

cause, which is less obvious. In a number of States the people have had special laws passed against trusts, which have remained a dead letter because they were not enforceable or because they were not enforced by public authorities under the thumb of the plutocrats.

Plutocracy develops the power of the Machine.

While plutocracy, fortified by the party Machine, was thus degrading the commonwealth, it developed, in its turn, the power of the Machine. It supplied the Machine with most of its resources and enabled it to take a fresh flight. It gave a most powerful impulse to that oligarchic or autocratic government of rings and bosses which party allowed to grow up in its midst. In all the States, where the industrial and financial corporations are numerous, not to speak of the United States Senate, the Machine and the boss, fed with their money as with a sap, flourish like a luxuriant plant that overshadows the whole of public life. In those States where the Machine is supreme, republican institutions are in truth but an idle form, a plaything wherewith to beguile children. It may be that the government of the bosses is not, administratively speaking, more ruinous for the people than plutocracy is oppressive for them from the economic standpoint. But both of them eat out the heart of the commonwealth. It is no longer "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people."

Why the people acquiesced.

192. Thus the evolution of American democracy has produced two facts of the utmost gravity: popular government has slipped away from the people, and commercialism in its most sordid aspect has laid hands on the government.

How is it that the people have allowed themselves to

be despoiled in this fashion? How has it been possible to get the better of this American nation which has presented the admirable spectacle of a creative force, of an indomitable energy, of a tenacious will that has no parallel? The explanation is a simple one: the people have expended all their moral strength in the material building-up of the commonwealth. In that new world which was a mine of untold riches for whoever cared to work it, material preoccupations have engrossed the American's whole being. "To make money" appeared to him as the destiny of man on earth, and the *raison d'être* of a well-ordered commonwealth was thenceforth, in his eyes, to promote the fulfilment of that destiny. The notion of the moral objects of the State grew dim in the public mind, the State was asked only to ensure or assist the production of wealth. Material prosperity being the sole aim of the commonwealth, just as under a "good tyrant," there was but one criterion, in everyday life, of the goodness of the government — the cost of it; the harm which a bad government could do was brought down to a money value. If the losses resulting therefrom to the citizen were not too serious, he was quite ready to bear them, were it only to save himself the worry and the trouble required for their prevention. The exceptional facility with which "money was made" in the New World developed a tendency to "live and let live," and to apply freely the old formula, *de minimis prætor non curat.*

Absorbed in making money.

But, even if they adopt the narrow standpoint of material prosperity, ought not the Americans to foresee that this prosperity must in the long run be affected by the political disorders, that sooner or later the penalty

will be paid for them, even in a purely material form?

Short views.

Of all races in an advanced stage of civilization, the American is the least accessible to long views. The boundless horizon of the continent and the resources of its virgin territory enable the American to turn the latter to account in the manner of an extensive rather than an intensive cultivation, not to say of a predatory type of exploitation. The eminently speculative mind of the American, due perhaps to the facility afforded by the New World for getting a quick return from everything, impels him again to take the path which leads to large immediate results. Always and everywhere in a hurry to get rich, he does not give a thought to remote consequences; he sees only present advantages. He is pre-eminently the man of short views, views which are often "big" in point of conception or of greed, but necessarily short.

Boundless optimism.

193. This epicureanism *sui generis* of the American, which bids him enjoy the present without troubling about the future, is naturally completed by a robust optimism which looks on all difficulties and all evils as transitory. The economic conditions which gave rise to this feeling have, in the course of American history, afforded ample justification for and made a truism of the favourite remark which I have already quoted, "It will right itself." In fact, the Americans have passed through many a serious crisis, often caused by their want of forethought and the extravagance of their financial administration, but they have always come out of them unharmed, thanks to the abundant resources of their country and to the extraordinary luck which they met with at the most trying moments. Brilliantly

justified by events, optimism is not only a general tendency, but almost a national religion. Next to the "unpractical man," there is no one held in such contempt as a "pessimist." He is almost his country's enemy, he defiles the spring at which the community imbibes strength for fresh efforts in the daily battle of life. The objector, the censor of abuses, is therefore always in bad odour: he is pre-eminently a pessimist. "A man with a grievance" is odious; like the whining youth who complains of his schoolfellows, he only shows his weakness of character; is there not room for every one in this favoured land of America? why does he button-hole busy people and seek to interrupt the march of time? what is the good of his recriminations about the past? yesterday has gone by, it is already far off. Wedded to the present, the American possesses a singular power of forgetfulness; the events of the day before are to him ancient history. Confident in the future, he exhibits a remarkable endurance of present evils, a submissive patience which is ready to forego not only the rights of the citizen, but sometimes the rights of man. He does not remember, he does not feel, he lives in a materialist dream.

Material aspirations fed by American patriotism.

194. It by no means follows, however, that higher aspirations are wanting to the American. It would be a gross mistake to set down Americans as incapable of idealism; they have an ample store of it in their composition, engrossed as they appear to be in the pursuit of the dollar — but up to the present they have made only a special use of it in public life. A brilliant writer has remarked that the Jews have put all their idealism into religion.[1] Whether this view is quite correct or not,

[1] Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, *Israel chez les nations.*

it might be said, with at least as much truth, that the Americans have put all their idealism into American nationality, into the country that is theirs. That country did not represent, as with the nations of the Old World, a community of sentiments accumulated for centuries and forming a treasure peculiar to itself. The "people of the United States," created by the Federal Constitution, had no language, religion, or past of its own, not even political ideas of its own. The Republic was created out of several pieces with infinite pains, it was wrested "by grinding necessities from a reluctant people," and for a long time afterwards each section pulled in a different direction. The national sentiment which had not the opportunity to develop in time developed in space. There the new nation unfolded its genius: it has, as it were, brought a whole continent out of nothingness; and each strip of ground "reclaimed from the wilderness" demonstrated its vitality, made it conscious of its strength. The integrity of the territory became the essential mark of the moral unity of the nation, the proof of its life. American patriots felt that this life depended on the material ties which knit together the pieces and the fragments out of which the federation had been made. The Americans, therefore, have put their whole soul into the Union. The remark of one of the greatest of them, of one who embodied the genius of the nation most forcibly and vividly, Henry Clay, — "If any one desires to know the leading and paramount object of my public life, the preservation of this Union will furnish him the key" — this remark is applicable to the whole nation in its past and in its present. Its greatness and its shortcomings

Cult of the Union.

would be unintelligible otherwise. The idea of the Union burned within the breast of its best sons like a sacred fire; it purified the less pure heart of the others. It lifted them all, in one and the same movement, above the accidental toward the eternal and the infinite. It was the sacred legacy which the mighty dead had bequeathed to the survivors. In the American Valhalla the departed heroes do not appear to be engaged, as in the paradise of Odin, in perpetual combat; having laid aside with their mortal vesture their rivalries and their enmities, all of them hand in hand, Jackson and Clay, Lincoln and Douglas, Grant and Greeley, join in a fervent cry, which descends to earth like a message from above: "The Union! It must be preserved!"[1]

Pride in the natural resources and beauties.

195. The natural features of the continent which is coterminous with the Union, and the aspect which the creative energy of man lends to it help to exalt and intensify the American patriotism. The citizen of the New World revels in the perpetual battle which he has to fight to gain and keep its possession, to subdue the forces of nature to his will; he swells with enthusiasm, which is not all hope of material results; his imagination contributes a great deal thereto, through the contemplation of the greatness of the effort; but it ascribes this greatness to the American even more than to the man, it merges the latter in the former. So with the natural beauties and resources of the continent. The great lakes, the immense rivers, the vast forests, the boundless prairies, the fertile soil, the invigorating climate, have been allotted by a just and far-seeing

[1] Jackson's celebrated toast.

Providence to the Americans, like Canaan to the chosen people; the majesty of this nature does but express in a material form the majesty of the American people; the Falls of Niagara were created by the Eternal to testify to the American genius in ages to come. "America is written all over the Falls," writes a celebrated journalist (Samuel Bowles), on a visit to Niagara. "Its roar is that of the nation. Its majestic sweep typifies the grand progress of America. The maddening, dashing, seething, buffing, pitching, uneasy flood typifies the intensity of the American mind and the vitality of American action. Here is the fountain of true, young America; here the breast which gives it milk; here the nurture which gives it vitality."

Creative force of liberty.

196. Next to the territory, and to man who had improved it, a third element went towards the creation of contemporary America — liberty. It is from liberty that man has drawn the strength with which he has conquered matter; it is she who has removed the obstacles in his path; it is she who has opened to all, down to the humblest members of the community, equal opportunities in the "pursuit of happiness"; it is liberty which has welded the component parts of the Union; for the first time in the history of the world an amalgam of peoples, of races, of religions, of tongues, has been produced otherwise than by the force of arms, and that motley assemblage, rivalling the confusion of the Tower of Babel, has formed a body with a soul, under the life-giving breath of the principles of the Declaration of Independence. In the indictment that was once brought against American democracy by Lecky (in his *Democracy and Liberty*), he quotes,

with certain reservations, the following passage from Ernest Renan: "If it were necessary that Italy, with her past, or America, with her future, should be blotted out of existence, which would leave the greater void in the breast of humanity? What has all America produced that can compare with a ray of that infinite glory that adorns an Italian town of the second or third order, Florence, Pisa, Siena, Perugia?" This view, though inspired by idealism, is due to a narrow conception of the ideal. The Most High dwelleth not only in Gothic cathedrals. America has not been able to serve the ideal by "le grand art," with which Renan consoles himself even for the degradation of a society in which it can be enjoyed, but she has served it in another way. The Declaration of American Independence, like the Declaration of the Rights of Man, has lifted as many souls heavenward as have all the monuments of Pisa and Siena. Like the French Revolution, America, by bringing good tidings to the world, has solaced humanity for a space and has filled it with immense hopes, however great the disappointments and disillusions which the future had in store. Besides, the moral springs which both have set flowing are still there, and it is enough to be willing and able to drink at them.

Ideal character of American liberty;

197. It is all very well to hold, as do some distinguished writers, with every appearance of reason, that the United States has been not so much a democracy as a great company for the exploration and exploitation of a vast territory, offering liberty and a share in political sovereignty as a sort of bounty to the workmen of whom the uncultivated New World stood in need. What difference in the value of the effects produced is

made by the hidden motives of the acts which stir the human heart, which thrill it? Even in a theatre where everybody is aware of stage convention, does the spectator before shedding tears over the corpse of Cordelia borne by King Lear ask himself what were the intentions of Shakespeare or those of the theatrical manager who produced the play? From the Pilgrim Fathers, who crossed the ocean amid storm and tempest within the frail timbers of the *Mayflower*, down to the poor wretches two centuries and a half later, penned up like cattle in the emigrant steamers, all journeyed in quest of liberty, without always understanding it as we understand it, often without being able to bring a clear definition of it out of their heavy-laden hearts; they went in search of it as towards an "unknown God," and they found that God. It is in vain that good observers, who yet dwell too much on the surface of things, have declared that "American liberty is not a mystic, undefined liberty; it is a special liberty corresponding to the special genius of the people and their special mission; it is a liberty of work and locomotion of which the American takes advantage to spread over the vast territory . . . and turn it to profitable account." No, it was a mystic, it was an undefined liberty. This, too, is "written over the Falls of Niagara": "And then the rainbows hovering over and about the scene, do they not signify the promise which America gives to mankind, the hope which it implants in weary-laden hearts, the home which it furnishes to the outcast and wanderer from governmental oppression and social villany elsewhere?" Abraham Lincoln, who embodied the best of the American character,

did not view the stream of American destiny otherwise than as flowing in this channel of universal human liberty, dug by the authors of the Declaration of Independence: such was "their majestic interpretation of the economy of the universe. . . . In their enlightened belief nothing stamped with the divine image and likeness was sent into the world to be trodden on and degraded and imbruted by its fellows. They grasped not only the whole race of men then living, but they reached forward and seized upon the farthest posterity. They erected a beacon to guide their children, and their children's children, and the countless myriads who should inhabit the earth in other ages." How is it that the work of the "Fathers" has lasted? "I have often inquired of myself," said Lincoln, "what great principle or idea it was that kept this confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of the separation of the colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment of the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty, not alone to the people of this country, but, I hope, to the world for all future time."

but it became materialized.

198. But, on the other hand, while granting that liberty — I repeat, a mystic and undefined liberty — is entitled to figure in the American escutcheon, one must admit that it has become materialized by use. Having served not to beautify an old home but to build up a new one, as it were with bricks and mortar, it has almost lost its spiritual nature in this rough handiwork. That first nature was not utterly destroyed, but it was etherealized; it was consigned to the sphere of a national cult rising above the cares of daily life and opening to men's minds, like a temple to the faith-

ful, only at the hour of prayer. Ideal liberty, thus contracted and enshrined in the halo with which the intoxication of material successes had surrounded the image of the Union, did but sanctify the national pride that was inspired by these successes; it did but develop that patriotic sensibility which absorbed the civic conscience. The inflated national sentiment grew more and more like the nationalist enthusiasm of which, under different circumstances, many a country of the Old World had furnished, or still furnishes, an example, and which makes the worship of country a pagan cult from which the living God is absent. In the United States that cult found its dogmatic formula in the cry: "Our country, right or wrong!" The American citizen, attracted by the material side of things, could thenceforth give himself up to it with all the less scruple that he had discharged his debt to the ideal by the patriotic sentiment which he carried in his breast. Yet the daily course of public life demanded more than this general tribute, it claimed the performance of regular moral duties towards the commonwealth. The busy citizen thereupon found new resources by providing himself with a patriotism of the second degree, that of party. He put into it the same fetishism which satisfied his idealist requirements at small expense, and he gave to it the same dogmatic expression as to his worship of country with a slight variation: "My party, right or wrong!" Invested with a more ritual character, the cult of party enabled the citizen to discharge his everyday civic obligations more easily with the outward observances of devotion.

Fetish-like worship of country,

and of party.

199. This coarse formalism was not only a more or

less unwitting or even hypocritical bargain that the citizen made with his conscience; it also forced itself on him through certain special tendencies of the American character, developed by religious tradition and by the moral position of the individual in society. The spirit of party, like that of fetishistic patriotism, is made up of sectarian contempt and dislike for those who are outside the fold, and of mechanical attachment to those who are inside. The Puritan mind which had helped to mould the character of New England bred the party spirit. Ebenezer Webster, the father of Daniel Webster, the illustrious statesman, on his death-bed begged not to be left to die in a non-Federalist city.

Cult of party developed by religious tradition,

The second factor to which I have alluded, and which impelled the American to herd with his fellows in the party fold, is one of the primordial facts of American social existence — the isolation of the individual. True, nowhere is man more unfettered in his movements; nowhere can the individual launch forth more freely; nowhere are political and, to all appearances, social barriers brought so low as in the United States; and yet nowhere else is man reduced to that atomic condition, so to speak, in which he finds himself on the western side of the Atlantic. The yoke of locality and heredity, heavily as it weighs on the denizen of the Old World, offers him at the same time a moral support. The American lives morally in the vagueness of space; he is, as it were, suspended in the air, he has no fixed groove. The levelled society, without traditions, without a past, in which he lives, does not provide him with one. The only traditional social groove which did exist, and which was supplied

by the hunger for fellowship,

by the churches, has been almost worn down by the incessant action of material civilization and the advance of knowledge. To construct, or wait for the construction of, new, permanent grooves, the American has neither the time nor the inclination. Obeying the national genius he creates mechanical ones, in the form of associations, as numerous and varied as they are superficial, but all revealing the uneasiness of the American mind assailed by a sort of fear of solitude and, again, by the desire felt by the individual to give himself a special status in the midst of the community at large. Such are the "patriotic" societies of Colonial Dames, Daughters of the Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, Sons of Veterans, etc., which seek to bring together men or women who have no tie between them but the fact of descending from ancestors closely or remotely connected with historical events.

by the need of far-reaching moral ties.

200. The great mass of citizens having no ancestors create a small world for themselves in the so-called secret or fraternal societies. These organizations often discharge the function of mutual benefit societies, but they are not less appreciated for the sentimental gratifications which the members derive from their "lodges," "tents," "commanderies," "chapters," "temples," "conclaves." A workman who belongs to the "Ancient and Illustrious Order of the Knights of Malta" spends half his weekly wages in buying a knight's sword, which will give him the illusion of being really a member of a noble brotherhood whose name goes back so far into the ages. The epithet "ancient" and the historical or mythical appellations which they

adopt for their societies[1] enable them to affirm, in imagination, their collective existence even in the remotest past. The mere fact of having a trade or an occupation or even an external peculiarity in common is taken as a pretext for pleasure parties; such are the barbers' picnics, the tailors' excursions, the dinners of men weighing more than fourteen stone, and other gatherings of the same kind, which are readily put down to "American eccentricity," but which in the morbid need of friendly contact that they reveal have rather something pathetic about them. In America everything is done in a crowd, by troops. The mania for being introduced to all comers without the introduction leading even to a conversation; the apparent friendliness with which every one is received; the facility with which people who hardly know each other exchange letters of introduction which do not bind the addressees to anything — are so many more manifestations of the need which is felt of procuring at least the illusion of more or less far-reaching moral ties.

Party filled a portion of the moral void: it met an emotional need; it offered a groove exclusive enough to permit of the growth of genuine or conventional feelings of hatred and devotion, and comprehensive enough to unite in these feelings men with no other bond between them, and even dispersed in space. Like the ancient Greek who found in the most distant colonies his national deities and the fire from the sacred hearth of his *polis*, the American finds in his nomadic existence

[1] Ancient Order of United Workmen, Ancient Order of Hibernians of America, Improved Order of Red Men, Knights of Pythias, Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine.

everywhere, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Maine to Florida, a Republican organization or a Democratic organization, which recalls him to himself, gives him a countenance, and makes him repeat with pride the cry of the New York politician: "I am a Democrat," or "I am a Republican."

Thus idealism itself, in its degenerate aspects of patriotic, political, religious, and social formalism, has combined with the materialistic spirit to deaden the civic conscience and let in the enemies of the public weal.

The havoc mitigated.

201. Yet the havoc wrought by the invaders being as extensive and profound as we have seen it to be, how is it that the commonwealth continues to prosper in spite of this, and that the Republic subsists, at least with no apparent diminution of strength? The havoc is no doubt very considerable, but up to the present it has had only a relative significance, thanks to the exceptional position enjoyed by the United States. The fact we have ascertained, that the government has slipped from the people, loses not a little of its import when one bears in mind how small is the place which government occupies in the existence of the New World, how limited are its powers and, consequently, its means of abusing them. The inhabitants of the American Republic are hardly "governed"; a citizen may spend his whole life without coming in contact with representatives of the government, unless he breaks the laws, and even if he does break them. The functions of government are not numerous or very complicated. Hence, the barbarous method of recruiting the public service, established by the spoils system, has not done

Rôle of government restrained.

all the harm which it would have done in a country of the Old World. The waste and plunder of public property in which the representatives of the people indulged were mitigated by the unbounded resources of a virgin country and by its growing wealth.

Usurping bosses covet chiefly wealth.

Lastly, even the usurpation of power by the bosses, the rings, and the machines did not entail the political consequences which the illegal seizure of power produces in the countries of the Old World, or even in Latin America; it has not touched, or has scarcely touched, liberty. Tocqueville has already called attention to the fact that the passions of the American people are not of a political, but of a commercial, nature. In that world, awaiting cultivation, the love of power aims less at men than at things. The Cæsar called for by the political abdication of American society, engrossed in the pursuit of wealth, emerged in the same guise, animated with the same instincts and the same greed of gain. To satisfy these appetites, even when there was grafted on them the desire to sway men's wills, it was enough to exploit the forms of liberty without meddling with its essence, to exploit the electoral régime.

Personal liberty protected.

202. Personal liberty was not less shielded from possible encroachments by the barriers erected by the Constitution. The rights of the individual, essential to his free moral and material development, had been formed into a sacred trust, the custody of which was confided to the sovereign authority of the courts placed for this purpose above all the other public powers: no police, no minister, no parliament can touch them. The strongest and cleverest usurper is equally power-

less to overthrow these barriers; all he can attempt is to get round them. Hence we have seen that the political autocrat developed by the party régime, the boss, has not succeeded in attaining the position of the tyrant of the Greek cities or of the Italian republics; he is an autocrat whose power is wielded in a somewhat limited sphere of public life. All the more has this autocracy been unable to increase to the point of taking the lead of the nation. After the Civil War, when corruption invaded the Republic and government was relaxed, anxious minds looked forward with apprehension to the appearance of the "man on horseback." He has not appeared, nor has the oligarchy of the bosses, which people were afraid of seeing installed at Washington. The centralizing tendencies developed through the war, as well as by the party régime, seemed indeed to pave the way for them; but they met with an insurmountable obstacle, also set up by the Constitution — the federative organization of the Republic. A Cæsar or a Napoleon, who "bestrides a world like a Colossus," and sways an empire from a capital, can only rise and flourish on a levelled political soil which presents a flat and smooth surface; now the American soil was broken up by a number of political units which, in spite of all vicissitudes, had preserved their individuality. The double organization, federal and local, of the public powers and of the governmental attributions, left as little room in the Union for a mayor of the palace as for an oligarchy. Thus the American Constitution issued triumphant from the ordeal to which the Machine régime had subjected it. The part of the constitutional apparatus which contained the

elective system yielded to the pressure of that régime. But the reserved rights of the individual, the federative organization, and the courts of law as political arbiters between the individual and the State and between the States and the Union, that is to say those parts of the Constitution which all vindicated personal liberty under various aspects, withstood the shock.

Plutocrats not aiming at political power.

203. Thanks to this combination of circumstances, the American citizen has not felt too seriously the consequences of the fact that the government has slipped from the people. It was the same with the second grave result brought about by the Machine régime, the subjection of the State to private commercial interests. With them privilege really did invade the State, but it did not pursue political ends. The plutocrats cared even less than the bosses about confiscating the liberties of the people; they thought of one thing only, morning, noon, and night — to enrich themselves as much as possible. Now, as long as it was a question of making money, the American was afraid of nobody; all he asked for, up to quite recently, was, "Give me elbow-room, and I will take care of the rest" — and in point of fact he got what he wanted. The change in the conditions of this free race, which is being brought about, under our eyes, by the inevitable exhaustion of natural resources and the formidable concentration of capital threatening to restrict freedom of production, was necessary to make individual interests begin to take the alarm.

Pursuit of wealth free to all.

Of course, the moral harm done by the Machine régime and the dangers to which it exposes the future of the Republic could not be mitigated by constitutional

guarantees, nor by the abundant resources of the country, nor by the special nature of the aims of the bosses and the plutocrats. This harm found a partial corrective in the mind of the citizen, who believes that he is still king in the State, and that he can put things to rights when he chooses. The words of the stump orator, "When the American people will rise in their might and majesty," are by no means a mere formula to his audience. Each one of them believes in this mysterious force which is called "the American people," and which nothing can withstand; he has a mystic faith in the power of opinion, he speaks of it with a sort of religious ecstasy. This faith in opinion makes up for the inadequate strength put forth by it. The citizen does not lift a finger to combat abuses, but his conviction that his mere volition is sufficient to put an end to them keeps up the love of right and the hatred of wrong within him, like a fire which barely emits a spark, but which is not extinguished and may at any moment burst into a generous flame, giving light and warmth.

The corrective of public opinion.

And then events have often, especially in these last years, justified that faith in opinion and shown it as a corrective of tremendous force. With ample stores of moral strength it can bring itself to bear on all and every one as soon as raised. It may not be easily focussed and brought into motion, but it is there. The Russian people enduring oppression through ages, and still believing in the justice of God and of the Tsar, but finding no redress, have a melancholy proverb: "The Almighty is high, the Tsar is far." In the United States the Almighty may still be high, but

public opinion is near. Along with the instrument of the Constitution, the potential power of opinion has vindicated in America liberty and democracy.

All those self-acting checks are slackening.

204. Yet the degree in which the dissolvent action of the party régime could be neutralized is in danger of considerable diminution, because the United States are more and more losing the benefit of those exceptional conditions which we have seen check the mischief. Their vast natural resources are beginning to be exhausted, especially the free lands. Again, in proportion as the continent is cleared, is covered with large cities containing a dense population, and as industrial civilization advances, social existence assumes a complexity which is no longer compatible with the primitive simplicity of government. The functions of the latter become more numerous, more complicated, and more delicate. Individual liberty will not be able to serve as an antidote to the same extent as formerly, for the amount of liberty available will naturally grow less. The more complex civilization becomes, the greater becomes the necessity for regulation. The rapid development of the "police power of government" which we have witnessed was aimed to meet this need. The legislation of these last years in Congress and in the States has made tremendous strides in the same direction. The new and extensive powers vested in the national authorities are tending almost to efface State lines, so that the protective barrier of the federal organization is becoming less effective.

External liberty is not alone in process of diminution. The moral autonomy of the individual, the consciousness which he had of his liberty, and which, to a

certain extent repaired, as it were in a worn-out frame, the strength wasted through the fault of the Machine, is also on the decline. This consciousness of his liberty was imparted to the individual mainly by his economic independence. Now, the latter is yielding under the action of the new factors such as the formidable industrial concentration; the scarcity of land and the competition, daily growing more formidable, of foreign corn; the small rural landowner beginning to give way to the tenant; the emigration to the cities steadily going on as a result of agricultural depression.

The decline of religious feeling, which is incontestable in the country districts as well as in the cities, is tending likewise towards the shrinkage of the individual by severing the strong ties which the Church formed among its members, not only in matters of religion; it is disturbing the equilibrium of the individual character.

The political development of the last decade, Imperialism on the one hand and governmental centralization and regulation riding roughshod over local autonomy on the other hand, are evidently exerting a far-reaching influence towards the same end. The indifference, not to say sometimes the levity, with which these new policies and their consequences are accepted, is rather ominous. There is noticeable to an observer a decided shrinkage of the sense of liberty in quarters where it should be least expected.

Lastly, the same effect is being produced by the political scepticism which the corruption of the party régime does not fail to develop.

The material as well as the moral reserve repre-

sented by the territory, by the individual, and by the economy of the Constitution being thus diminished, the passive resistance offered by these latent forces to the destructive action of the Machine régime will be less effective than of yore. The favourite saying of the Americans, "It will right itself," is becoming every day more untrue. Only an active resistance, a vigorous offensive, will be able to check the mischief, or perhaps even eradicate it.

Determined recuperative action necessary.

205. The task is a gigantic one: the citizen has to be reinvested with his power over the commonwealth, and the latter restored to its proper sphere; the separation between society at large and politics must be ended, and the divorce between politics and morality annulled; civic indifference must give place to an alert and vigilant public spirit; the conscience of the citizen must be set free from the formalism which has enslaved it; those alike who confer and who hold power must be guided by the reason of things, and not by conventional words; superiority of character and of intelligence, that is to say real leadership, dethroned by political machinism, must be reinstated in the governance of the Republic; authority as well as liberty, now usurped and trafficked under the party flag and in the name of democracy, must be rehabilitated in the commonwealth.

Tremendous task;

Certainly the task is tremendous, but not hopeless. And the proof of it is that a portion, small as it is, of what has to be done, is already accomplished. The last few years, as we have seen, have been marked by an awakening of the civic conscience. The business community displays a much keener interest in local

but beginning already made.

public affairs than formerly. Cultivated society and, in particular, the rising generation, descend into the political arena with an ardour which was unknown thirty years ago. Public morality has advanced; society has become more alive to right and wrong. Public opinion is beginning to extricate itself from the narrow and deadly groove of parties. The fetish-like cult of party has incomparably fewer fervent worshippers. Party ties are being relaxed in all the organizations, through the progress of enlightenment and the feeling of social unrest which works upon certain classes of society and, in these latest years, owing to the process of heartsearching which has come over the community in consequence of the exposures of financial and political dishonesty. In the South itself economic changes are tending to unsettle parties, the "Solid South" is breaking. In the Middle West parties have already gone to pieces in many a State. Intellectual progress is incontestable throughout the community, and people unquestionably vote with more discrimination. The personal qualities of the man in public life, his moral worth, are becoming more and more appreciated. Voluntary leadership, personal leadership is beginning to dispute the ground with organized leadership, and the latter's power is on the decline. The expert is gaining in public estimation; slowly and laboriously he is undermining the prejudice so widely entertained that the public interest can be entrusted to the first comer, to "a plain man like all the rest of us."

Conditions of further improvement.

These results are not to be despised, but they constitute only a small instalment of the whole debt. The further raising of the standard of American

political society must depend, of course, on the further improvement of its culture, both intellectual and moral, and of its political methods. The whole story told here points to this end and foreshadows clearly enough the path along which that advancement is to be sought. It remains for us to formulate the conclusions as well as the practical measures which the experience we have examined seems to suggest.

SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER

CONCLUSION

Experience related is not a condemnation of democracy,

but of its methods.

206. THE mishaps and failures which we have only too often witnessed cannot be attributed to democratic government as such. Through this very experience, so full of sadness, democracy has vindicated itself again and again. Along with the exceptional character of American economic development and the corrupting influence of Protectionism, the ways and means by which democratic government has been worked up, in one word political methods, are largely responsible for the unsatisfactory results.

The old tradition of the struggles against absolute power impelled American political society to develop to its utmost the elective régime. Representative institutions were, for the subjects, the means of ensuring the security of their persons and property; and each step forward in this direction marked a new conquest in the domain of popular liberties, until, established for good and all, an elective régime became a synonym for a régime of liberty. Under cover of this political evolution, a prejudice grew up which attributed a sort of mystic virtue to the elective principle in itself, and made it an axiom that the more widely the elective method is applied in public organization the more liberty there is. When, to accomplish liberty, society

Elective system carried to excess.

started in pursuit of equality, it sought to realize it by the same means: by giving fresh developments to the elective principle. It subjected to universal suffrage the greatest possible number of public functions, and even the extra-legal domain of political influence, represented by party associations. The hypertrophy of the electoral system reached such a pitch that the nation could not properly discharge the duty thrust on it, and in its helplessness it threw itself on election-brokers and managers who, on pretence of helping bewildered public opinion, became its masters.

Limits of the electoral principle.

207. The lesson following therefrom is that, contrary to current prejudice, the elective principle in government is a spring of limited power; once the limit is exceeded, it becomes, like a strained mechanical spring, incapable of supplying the required impulse, and throws the movement out of order. It follows, again, that a highly developed electoral system produces, in reality, a diminution of the people's strength. By parcelling out, so to speak, public functions of every kind on the elective method, the people fritter away their authority instead of increasing it; the direct responsibility to themselves, which they try to establish all along the line, is scattered, and, while supposed to be everywhere, is really nowhere. To make responsibility to the people a reality, it is necessary that it should be concentrated and applied only to certain well-defined attributions of the public authority, to those which, by their nature, dominate all others, that is to say, in the modern State, in the first instance, to legislative functions, and, in the second degree, to those of local self-government.

Every extension of the elective régime beyond these limits, to administrative posts and to judicial office, can be admitted only as the lesser of two evils, namely in countries which are still in the lower or intermediate stage of political progress, such as Russia, for instance, or even Germany. There an elective administration and judiciary may give public opinion an opportunity of making itself heard and enable it to exercise a modicum of control over public affairs, of which it is deprived by the political organization. They may serve as a means of civic education to awaken and stimulate interest in the public weal, which is still feebly developed; or, again, hold in check a bureaucracy that is corrupt, or withstand one that is honest and capable but arrogant and dictatorial, and whose representatives fondly imagine that they are made of a different clay from other people. That is to say, the progress of a political community is appraised not by the extension of the elective method in its organization, but by the degree to which the body politic may venture to restrict it and to entrust fearlessly its administration and courts of law to permanent officials. When a community has reached true liberty, when public opinion, become supreme, holds the legislative power, — the source of all powers, — and commands liberty of the Press, of association, and of meeting, the elective method applied to administration ceases to render the services which it may have rendered to the community during its years of growth and struggle, and, serving no useful purpose, recoils even against the public : it makes the latter exhaust itself in electoral efforts, which are henceforth superfluous

and simply divide and weary its attention, blunt its moral energy, and, in the long run, withdraw public opinion from its real duty, which is that of supervising and controlling the organs of government.

Preliminary election stage left out of sight.

208. The prejudice which attributed an intrinsic efficacy to the elective system was complicated by another mistake, perhaps brought in its train — the no less grave mistake of supposing that the application of this system could be left to itself. This view came direct from the eighteenth century, which had a fond belief in the, so to say, automatic and universal action of moral ideas. It was proclaimed as axiomatic that mankind had been unhappy because men were ignorant of their rights; that, to be free, it was enough to know and to love liberty, etc. By enacting the elective system, had not enough been done to realize liberty? There seemed to be no inkling that a popular election demands the agreement of a considerable number of persons, an agreement of minds and wills which needs to be established beforehand. The founders of the American Republic themselves, who examined the dangers and the difficulties of democratic government so closely, had not, it would appear, bestowed a moment's thought on the question of how the electors should be brought together and made of one mind to achieve the final act conferring the mandate. It is probable that the limited horizon of the small republics, with an insignificant population, in which the framers of the American Constitution lived, as well as the social hierarchy which was still supreme in public life, hid this problem from their eyes. There was no thought even of deciding how qualified and unqualified persons

should be distinguished at the elections; there was no attempt to establish any system of electoral lists.

Harmful effects.

Private organizations stepped into the void left by the State, and soon they laid hand on the whole procedure which prepares and determines the elections. To control the action of the citizens during this preliminary electoral phase, a very complicated machinery was created, forming a pendant to the constitutional mechanism. It was accepted all the more readily that it met a real public want. But the more fully it appeared to satisfy that want, the more its action extended, and the more it degraded public life. It was like a parasite, which feeds on the vital parts of the body and weakens all its members.

Tardy and mistaken intervention of the State.

209. Alarmed at last, the State intervened. But unconscious of its rights and duties, it stumbled hither and thither and groped in wrong directions. Experience revealed the lack in political machinery of an apparatus corresponding to the preliminary phase of electoral operations; then it was the duty of the State to create that supplementary apparatus and not allow private initiative to undertake it with a selfish object. State intervention to that end could in no way interfere with the citizen's right to select freely his representatives. That liberty of the citizen is above the State, but to permit of its exercise it should, like all liberties, be guaranteed and, if need be, organized by the State. Now the American State, instead of so doing, tried at first to remonstrate gently with the private organizations, which had captured the business of selecting candidates, and suggested to them to behave themselves, obligingly offering them rules of better conduct

(optional regulation of primaries). Ignored by those organizations, the State addressed them in a more commanding tone (beginnings of the mandatory regulation of the primaries), but with scanty success. Then, stung to the quick by the pressure of public opinion, it resorted to more drastic measures in submitting to strict and compulsory regulation the preliminary stage of election procedure — as conducted by the great parties (latest phase of legal direct primaries). The State took on itself those operations, but only on behalf of the parties. These latter preserved their mastery and in the end secured a safer tenure, while becoming part of the legal machinery.

Incorporation of political parties into the State.

The idea underlying the form of regulation resorted to — that of incorporating political parties into the State — was fundamentally wrong. Running counter to the elementary notions of the relations between State and citizens under free institutions, the legalization of parties is equally unjustifiable in its results. A political party is by its very nature a free combination of citizens acting solely of their own will, so far as it does not offend the law of the land. Their relations to the State and to public authorities are just the same as those of any number of citizens lawfully uniting for this or for that purpose. Party as such is quite unknown to a State which respects the fundamental rights of citizens. The State has no right to ask the members of any group what their political ideas are or what is their political record. It is no business of the State to hall-mark political opinions or to settle the conditions on which the hall-mark shall be granted. In no free country has such an interference been attempted.

Russia alone has recently hit on the idea of "legalizing political parties," certainly without knowledge of the American precedent. Pressed hard, the Russian autocracy was compelled, in 1905, to consent to a semblance of constitutional government. But when confronted with political parties born of the freedom wrested from it in a moment of despondency, it contrived to sort them, giving recognition to the harmless and denying existence to the wicked. A special police board was established, to which any party had to apply for "legalization." But then the Russian government proved at least consistent: while prosecuting and persecuting the "non-legalized" parties, it did not meddle with the parties allowed to live. The American State suppresses no party but interferes with all.

Constitutional viewpoint.

210. By what right can it do so? In a few States that right has been questioned in the courts, with regard to the regulation of the party primaries. In most of these cases the right of regulating parties has been upheld, without much discussion, on the ground that the Constitution does not prohibit such legislation, that party management is of such vital importance to the public and to the State that the law ought to take care of it, that such regulation is an exercise of the police power of the State and therefore is clearly within the legislative province.

All these reasons can scarcely be considered as pertinent. Is it enough that the Constitution should be silent on a subject to allow the legislature to enact with regard to it any rule? Are there not political precepts which belong to the category of "self-evident truths" and need not be specified even in written constitutions?

Can the importance alone of a political or social phenomenon justify the interference of the State? Could not, for reasons similar to those applied to the management of party organizations, the party Press be regulated? are not the newspapers manipulated by the Machines and bosses as noxious as the party committees manipulated by them? It would be unconstitutional to abridge the freedom of the Press! But is it more in harmony with the spirit, at least, of the Constitution to prevent an elector from voting for the nomination of the man of his choice if this latter happens to be on the ticket of a party with which the elector has ceased to act or has not yet acted? Has not this question been answered in advance most pertinently in a famous decision of the Massachusetts Court (Capen *v.* Foster, 1832), which, while recognizing the right of the State to regulate the mode of exercising the suffrage, stipulates that "such a construction would afford no warrant for such an exercise of legislative power, as, under the pretence of and colour of regulating, should subvert or injuriously restrain the right itself"? Again, the police power of the State is admitted and is often justifiable, but to proclaim that a thing is done by the exercise of police power is no proof that it is rightly done; rather it may be an act of might than of right. So it was in the cases under consideration when the police power of the State extended itself over manifestations of opinion. The true limit of the power of the State in that direction has been indicated by the dissenting justice in the court of New York who said that "the legislature may, doubtless, forbid fraud, corruption, intimidation or other crimes in political organization the

same as in business associations, but beyond this it cannot go."

Objections of practical application and political fitness.

211. Objections to the "legalization" of political parties are not, however, confined to constitutional theory. The working of the new-fangled system raises from the start serious practical difficulties. Parties being somewhat numerous and liable to multiply and to take shape rather unexpectedly, they cannot be all easily incorporated into the legal machinery. The legislature found it more convenient to hall-mark the old organizations and submit them to special requirements while according them special privileges. The commonwealth, whose very name means absolute neutrality towards all and any group of citizens, was brought to discriminate between political parties. Nay, it allowed itself to become the guardian of party regularity. Disfranchising, as regarded nominations, voters who changed their party allegiance, it induced, even compelled, their adherence, for a time at least, to the old organizations. Giving to the regular parties privileges on the ballot, it hampered the free competition of new political associations. It attempted to fix the tide of political opinion, whose untrammelled flow is the preordained law of freedom. Like the State of old, custodian of Church orthodoxy, it has made itself the custodian of party orthodoxy, and privileged parties are created after the fashion of established Churches. In the train of party establishment there is following already its twin — endowment. President Roosevelt in his message to Congress of 1906 recommended that election expenses should be refunded from the public treasury to the two leading parties. The infidels of

the other parties were evidently to be rooted out gently by starvation. The idea was carried out, and to its logical extreme, in the legislation of a Western State, in Colorado, which has just (in 1909) enacted a law enjoining the State to pay 25 cents for each vote cast at the preceding contest for governor, this sum to be distributed to the party chairmen in proportion to the votes cast by each party. New parties are *ipso facto* excluded from the participation in this manna. But that is not all. Contributions by other persons than the candidates themselves and by corporations to political parties, committees or candidates, are made a felony punishable by fine and imprisonment. Quite justly remarks an independent journal: "This law gives the great parties practically all the funds. It gives to third parties little. It gives the independent movement none. And it makes a felony for the movement with no funds to contribute anything to the defeat of the party with the barrel. It gives the great parties funds raised by taxation and it makes the financing of competing parties criminal."

Legalization of parties foredoomed by ballot legislation,

The path entered by the American legislature was indeed an incline which it has gradually but continually and fatally descended. When enacting the Australian ballot, to secure secrecy of the suffrage and orderly voting, the legislature conferred a privileged position on the ballot to the candidates of the "parties," instead of putting all political groups, whether regular or not, on a footing of equality by requiring them all to lodge a petition for having their candidates placed on the ballot and by withholding from any candidate its hallmark. From that moment the fate of the "legalization

of parties" was sealed, and step by step it reached those drastic forms of the "exercise of the police power of the State" which we know.

carried out in a commercial spirit.

Such proceedings, however determined and high-handed, cannot be considered a vindication of the authority of the State, intervening imperiously to right the wrongs in the community. In reality it was an application of the commercial methods prevailing in the country. When a great business meets another in its course, it endeavours to render the competitor harmless by buying him out, by force if necessary. Exactly so did the American State when confronted with the abuses of the party system; it took it into partnership and assumed to a large extent the management of its affairs on the basis of distributing the dividends between party and public decency.

New plan of a nominating system.

212. However, between public and private interests there can be no partnership; in public life the public interest must have undivided sway: there is no *condominium* possible. The preliminary stage of the electoral operations, as has been pointed out, should be organized entirely and solely by the State on behalf of the people as a whole without paying any attention to parties. The plan could be carried out on lines such as these: Sometime before the election, say a month, all the voters should be convened by the public authorities to a preliminary poll to express their preferences for nominees for public offices. To be entered at that poll an aspirant to office should be presented by "petition," *i.e.* by a more or less considerable number of voters, whether or not belonging to an organized party. All candidates for nomination would be put on the

official ballot, distributed at public expense, together with short statements of their opinions, forwarded for consideration to all the voters at a reasonable interval. The three aspirants who polled the highest number of votes would be submitted to the final judgment of the electors without any label pinned to them on the official ballot, just as at the preliminary poll. The final choice would be made only by the electors who participated in the preliminary poll. At either poll the electors would be allowed to vote for more than one candidate, indicating next to their best man their second or even third choice.[1]

The reader will remember that a somewhat similar scheme of "non-partisan primaries" is already making headway in the West and in Massachusetts. The particular character and the merits claimed for the plan advocated here will appear from what follows.

What is claimed for that plan.

213. Ignoring completely party distinctions, my plan will put all candidates on a footing of equality, will bring them all before the electorate, alike those of the great political trusts formed by the regular parties and also the independent candidates. Requiring that all the candidates be introduced by a certain number of electors, it will at once preclude the exaggerated multiplicity of candidatures and help to elicit from the first a deliberate expression of the political views of the different groups of electors. The absence of any party label on the ballot will compel the still larger mass of voters to look somewhat more closely at the man instead of voting mechanically for the signboard; it will

[1] The Idaho law of 1909 on direct primaries provides for the second-choice vote.

impel the bulk of the voters to a mental effort which they are now allowed and invited to dispense with. The statements of the candidates' opinions brought home to the voters, in the literal meaning of the word, will help them to make up their minds more consciously. They will no longer be constrained to accept the only candidate nominated, whether he is a good selection or not, from fear of scattering their votes and letting in the adversary. By means of the preliminary poll it will be possible to reconnoitre the electoral ground, which under the existing system is rather hidden from the view of the voters as in a fog. The possibility of indicating their second choice will still farther enhance their freedom of selection, their facility for realizing in time the strength of the political tendencies obtaining in the constituency and the popularity of the several candidates. They will no longer be at the mercy of selfish wire-pullers. The traffic in political labels and the monopoly of candidatures enjoyed by committees and caucuses will be cut short.

In the interval between the preliminary poll and the election the claims of the few candidates selected can be carefully threshed out in public discussions, so that every voter willing to listen and to remember will be enabled to vote like a man. An election will no longer be a game of hazard. At the same time party and legitimate partisanship will preserve their full scope. But it will no longer be easy to shuffle the party cards, as at present, by Republicans taking part in Democratic primaries and *vice versa*, or voting in joint primaries for a weak candidate of the opposite party to defeat him the easier at the election. Under the plan I advocate any

elector voting perfidiously at the preliminary poll for a candidate of another party will run the risk of defeating his own end, because his real favourite may by such tactics fall behind the three first runners admitted to the final test and because electors after the preliminary poll may still have the choice of more than one candidate of their own party. A party man will not be able to spare a single vote at the preliminary poll if he wants to see his favourite among the first three runners. The crucial problem, at present quite insoluble, of how to prevent members of one party from voting at primaries for candidates of another party, is thus solved. The evil of the primaries being abandoned to the politicians will cure itself by the same process, since no elector anxious to secure the election of his favourite will be admitted to vote unless he has taken part in the preliminary poll.

The institution of a preliminary poll will amount to a double election and to a double electoral campaign. Thereby the trouble that the voters have to take may be increased, but the present system of primaries and especially of direct primaries involves also a preliminary stage of the election agitation. Besides, compensation for additional electoral activity may be found in making elections less frequent, a matter which will be discussed later. Lastly, increased electoral activity in itself is not an evil; it is wholesome when it manifests a vigilant public spirit or is helping to promote such.

Party system too must be changed.

214. Yet the beneficial results which the preliminary polls must assuredly produce would not go far enough if the change were confined to this legal reform. Previous agreement on the part of the electors would be

almost as necessary for the preliminary poll as it is at present for the single election, and that necessity could be still exploited, though in a much smaller degree, by the interested go-betweens of the party organizations. These latter have succeeded in monopolizing and in exploiting electoral action, not solely owing to the State having neglected to take necessary measures, but thanks also to certain habits of mind which they have developed in the citizens and to modes of action which they have forced on them. The monopoly of party organization, so disastrous for democracy, will not be destroyed before those mental habits and modes of action are changed, before the present basis of party organization pressing down opinion in fixed and rigid grooves is transformed.

Old system out of date,

This basis is antiquated. It rests on conceptions contrary to the modern spirit and on political conditions which have ceased to exist. Party came down to us as an inheritance of the theological and ecclesiastical age. Its organization resembled that of the adherents of a Church; its principles or programme constituted a creed invested, like the creed of a Church, with the sanction of orthodoxy and heterodoxy. The adherence had to be undivided; one could not differ from the party on any article of its faith any more than one could choose between the dogmas of a religion. Like the Church which takes charge of all the spiritual needs of man, Party demanded the whole citizen. Conformity with the party creed was the sole rule of political conduct; like a religious faith it conferred saving grace on all its members, present and to come, without further effort on their part.

Since the advent of democracy, Party formed on an ecclesiastical basis has possessed no more rational justification in facts. Its historic foundation has collapsed. The old divergences, which divided society into two hostile camps, fell into the background after the definitive conquest of the fundamental liberties which placed all on an equal footing in the State, and ensured to each man the untrammelled development of his moral and material personality. The new problems were no longer of a nature to divide men's minds for generations, and could no longer give rise on each side to ties as lasting as the old ones. At the same time the problems became infinitely more numerous and varied; the emancipation of the individual and the growing diversity of the social conditions of a more complex civilization had substituted everywhere — in men's ideas, interests, aspirations — variety for unity, and a sort of perpetual flux for the comparative stagnation of the old days. The greater diversity of problems naturally produced more divisions, which could not be reduced into two sets as formerly, but mingled and crossed in men's minds, all the more easily that the ties formed by the old combinations were relaxed.

irrational.

These conditions could not be done away by the theory of the natural dualism of the human mind which the champions of the system were fond of advancing — a theory according to which the human race is divided into those who wish to keep things as they are and those who desire to change them, from which it would follow that there must, and always will be, two permanent parties. No doubt each problem may be viewed under two different aspects, but is it natural

that the same persons should always, in all things, take, the one set the negative, the other the affirmative? Is it reasonable to admit that a man who desires to preserve the Established Church should necessarily wish to keep the dirt in the streets, as Mr. Joseph Chamberlain asserted in the days when he belonged to the Radical party?

Exercise of power by party no longer justifiable.

215. The system of rigid parties having as its object not only the triumph of their principles but the conquest of power had its justification in the struggles for liberty. The exercise of power by the victorious party was not intended only to gratify ambition and greed, but was necessary as the sole means of ensuring the triumph in practical life of the conception of public policy represented by that party. The antagonism between the conceptions embodied by the parties affected the very foundations of political society; it was so profound, and the passions of the parties were so violent and irreconcilable, that even after victory, in time of peace so to speak, conquests had to be defended as in time of war; one or other of the two parties had to hold the citadel of the State in order to overawe its opponent and secure the untrammelled application of the principles of public policy which it supported. But soon these principles were recognized by every one; they no longer were in danger from any party, for they had sunk into the national conscience and were protected by a new power which had arisen in the meantime and which all parties thenceforth humbly invoked — the power of opinion.

However, the parties which had enjoyed power had little notion of giving it up, and by a tacit agreement

they wielded it alternately, according to the changing fortunes of their contests. The confusion, at first unavoidable, between party conceived as a combination of free citizens pursuing a political object, and party as a troop storming the heights of power in order to divide the spoils, was perpetuated. "Party government" became a regular institution. Its legitimacy and its necessity were accepted as a political dogma owing to the very human tendency to cloak selfish aspirations under considerations of the general interest, and to that common philosophy which always professed, even before Hegel, that everything which is real is rational. In countries such as England or the United States, where the democratic régime is established beyond dispute, and liberty occupies an unassailable position, the tenure of power by a party which entrenches itself in it as in a fortress has become an anachronism, and the pretended necessity of this domination of party, in order to make the political principles of the majority prevail in government, is no longer aught but a pure convention, not to say an imposition. In such a country the formula attributed to Gambetta, "One can only govern with one's own party," is as meaningless as would be the formula, "One can only go to law before one's own judges."

Enforcement of laws is outside of party divergences.

216. The task of government comprises two functions — to make laws and to execute them. The enforcement of the laws lies, by its very nature, outside all divergence of political principles; there cannot be several conceptions or several ways of executing the laws under a régime which is not one of mere arbitrariness. There does not appear, therefore, to be any

reason why the exercise of the executive power should belong to one party more than to another. It demands only honest and capable administrators.

Legislation a matter for agreements *ad hoc*.

It is not so with legislation. The divergences which tend to split the community into different camps are natural, necessary, and beneficial here. The more the régime of liberty is firmly established in a country, the more do these divergences arise spontaneously, and the more it is necessary, in order to find a solution, that the citizens should form combinations and groups, and do battle with all the weapons which liberty places at their disposal. But why should the stake of these contests be power? Power can only be obtained by getting a majority; but if one has the majority on one's side, it is sufficient to carry the desired reform or to prevent that which is dreaded. Thanks to the régime of popular sovereignty, it is easy to bring about the most sweeping changes in the legal sphere without any need for anxiety about the attitude of the executive power: whether it will or no, it is bound to submit; whereas in non-popular régimes one must step over the bodies of the holders of power and take their place in order to obtain a change in the established order. If, for instance, in a country which lives under the economic régime of free trade, the protectionists wish to put an end to it, they have but to start an active propaganda in the country, and as soon as they have obtained a majority in parliament, the latter will pass as high a customs tariff as the victors ordain. Should this protectionist party be bent, moreover, on seizing office, it would clearly be to gratify the lust of power. Once in possession, its main preoccupation would be to keep

itself in control; and it could succeed only by bringing in its train all the evils engendered by the present party system. As soon as a party, even if created for the noblest object, perpetuates itself, it tends to degeneration. It is enough to recall the career of the Republican party which was founded by the Lincolns to combat slaveholding, and which, through having perpetuated itself after it had solved the problem of slavery, became a hotbed of corruption.

No stereotyped parties.

217. This being so, is not the solution demanded by the problem of parties an obvious one? Does it not consist in discarding the use of permanent parties with power as their aim, and in restoring and reserving to party its essential character of a combination of citizens formed specially for a particular political issue? Party as a wholesale contractor for the numerous and varied problems, present and to come, should give place to special organizations, limited to particular objects and forming and re-forming spontaneously, so to speak, according to the changing problems of life and the play of opinion brought about thereby. Citizens who part company on one question would join forces on another.

Superiority of single-issue organizations.

The basic conditions for the corruption and tyranny engendered by the present party régime will disappear with their material foundation, which is permanence of organization, and their moral foundation, which is the conforming habit of the party adherents. The temporary and special character of the parties created on the new method will not permit of the enrolment and maintenance of those standing armies with whose help power was won and exploited. On the other hand,

party "regularity" will no longer have an object: permanent homage is not to be paid to what is transitory. No longer able to rely on sentimental devotion to its name and style, party will have, in spite of itself, so to speak, to rest on the adhesion of minds and consciences to something well defined, to a clearly specified cause identified with a public interest. Enlisted in the exclusive service of that cause, party organization will revert to its function of means and will cease to be an end; formerly a tyrannical master, it will have to become a docile servant. The problem contained in these propositions is certainly a most serious and complex one and requires thorough scrutiny. I have endeavoured to contribute to it in my larger work,[1] to which I must refer the reader for a full discussion of the subject. Here I may be allowed to say that the substitution of special and more elastic organizations for permanent and stereotyped parties appears to me fully justifiable in reason, within the range of practical possibility in a future not too remote, and quite in accordance with the tendencies of current political evolution.

The existing system is collapsing.

218. It may suffice here to recall the strongest argument in favour of the new method, the argument of facts: the existing party system is collapsing and the new method takes shape and develops. In the United States, as elsewhere, the old parties are breaking up; they can no longer contain the incongruous elements brought together under the common flag. Intestinal strife, schisms, artifices and manœuvres intended to

[1] *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties*, Vol. II, pp. 651–695.

conceal them are the very essence of their existence. Incapable of welding the several shades of opinion which they are supposed to represent, they can discharge no longer their second fundamental function, which is to serve as a counterpoise one to another and thus to ensure the regular play of political forces. At the same time the political development of the United States is paving the way for the new method of political action. Its basis has been laid in the struggles for emancipation in the form of "committees of seventy," or of "one hundred," of the "citizens' movements," of the "mugwumps," of the "leagues" or "civic federations," all of which represented free associations of men brought together for a particular cause, completely setting aside, for the nonce, their views on other political questions. By this method it has been possible to combine all the living forces of American society in the struggle against political corruption, and to win victories which enable us not to despair of American democracy and of the government of the people by the people. In the sphere of great national questions, as well as in municipal life, everywhere the "leagues" have been the instigators of the civic awakening; all the great reforms which have been passed to purify political life, beginning with that of the civil service, are due to their initiative or to their efforts; they have broken the prescription set up in favour of party tyranny and corruption.

The new method takes shape and develops.

The old system of stereotyped parties, though worn out and rotten, will naturally continue for a time, according to a common law of development which shows that an institution after having outlived its usefulness

continues by sheer force of inertia, by custom despotically swaying men's minds. It is, therefore, impossible to predict when the old method will give way. But one thing can be asserted with confidence: the more the new method is developed the easier will be cured the evils afflicting the body politic. Independent action in public life through free combination must become the slogan of American democracy; there is its hope, there is its future.

Proposals for reform of the elective system.

219. To produce their full effect the new methods of political action must be completed by some changes in legal organization. One of these has been already considered — the preliminary election polls. The elective system requires other improvements. This need cannot be set aside by the development of direct government which has been agitated for some time with so much energy. Under existing civilization the various political, social, and economic problems demanding legislation are mostly of too complex a nature to be solved in their details by the people at large, and there is no prospect that in the near future the Referendum and the Initiative will be applied beyond limited areas and limited ranges of questions. A continent-wide democracy and an industrial democracy too, as is the United States, is necessarily wedded to representative government. Instead of taking for granted "the failure of representative government," it is of the utmost urgency to improve that government, beginning with the elective system.

The first and greatest reform in the elective system is the curtailment of the system itself, the reduction of the number of elective offices to a minimum. With-

out that the voter will remain as helpless to grapple with the ballot and as easy a prey to the politicians as he is at present. All the administrative offices in the State government as in the local and municipal government ought to be filled by appointment. The State and municipal assemblies, too, ought to be reduced to reasonable membership. Care ought, however, to be taken not to run to the opposite extreme, as has sometimes happened under the "commission plan" in municipal government. Executive power may be concentrated as much as possible, but so much the closer it needs to be supervised by the people's representatives chosen for that purpose in sufficient numbers. As to the judiciary it might as well benefit by being taken out, to a certain extent at least, of the elective system, or, in other words, of politics. Public prosecutors, State and district attorneys, the sentries of the law, stand perhaps in most urgent need of this change. The justices of the lower courts, whose jurisdiction brings them close to the people, might continue to be invested with their trust by the people, more interested and better placed for testing the confidence in them. However, their term of office ought to be lengthened. Justices of the supreme courts and even those of the courts of appeal, the last refuge of the wronged, ought to be put in the position of the English judge, of whom it has been said that he has nothing more to hope for and nothing to fear. These justices should never have their ermine soiled in the gutter of electioneering. If, nevertheless, their election should be considered necessary, they ought at least to be given life tenure.

The members of the legislative and municipal assem-

blies representing currents of opinion of a more or less transitory nature, must, of course, undergo a periodical trial before their electors, and at reasonable intervals. But if the elections are fixed too near each other, the task they impose on the voters becomes too burdensome to be well performed, while the precariousness of tenure deters rather than encourages good men to stand for office. To improve the calibre of candidates and to enable and compel the voter to select them more thoughtfully, elections should, apart from being limited to a few offices, not be of frequent occurrence. To keep the nation and its representatives in touch with one another in spite of the latter's longer tenure of office it would be enough to maintain and to extend the system of renewal of assemblies by instalments. I would accept alike for the United States Senate and House of Representatives the term of six years, established for the Senate, and have both renewed every three years by halves, and for the State legislatures and municipal assemblies the term of four years with two biennial instalments.

Recall.

220. In proportion to the greater duration of the mandate the voter's sense of responsibility will be increased; but may not the mandate-holder's be decreased? The contrary may be expected from the higher calibre of the candidates attracted by the longer tenure. Besides, a special power may be found for keeping the representative all the time up to the mark by giving his constituents the right of unseating him at any moment. That means, already suggested by Bentham, which I have advocated,[1] has since been

[1] In *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties*, 1902. Vol. II, p. 711.

adopted in some States and is known briefly by the name of Recall. The short experience of the new institution (in California and elsewhere) has fully justified it. The Recall adopted with regard to municipal officers in some cities could be extended with no less reason and probably with as much success to members of legislative assemblies. A petition signed by a certain proportion of voters and lodged with the president of the assembly should cause *eo ipso* the vacation of the seat and the ordering of a new election. To prevent the improper use of the Recall the number of signatures required should be fixed at a high enough figure, equal to no less than a half of the voters at the last election. If a smaller number were allowed, the defeated minority might endeavour to upset the election, while if the member no longer possesses the confidence of half the electors of his constituency it is only right that he should lose his seat.

General ticket system,

The electoral system in the strict meaning of the term might also very profitably be improved. The old quarrel between the partisans of the general ticket system and the district system is far from having become objectless. The narrow groove of the district and ward system from which evolve the representatives of the people has contributed not a little to the lowering of the standard of public life along the whole line from the municipal councils to Congress. The electoral horizon must be elevated above the parish bell; a public spirit must be developed in place of the parochial spirit. That can scarcely be achieved without extending the electoral areas. The general ticket, however, would bring about another form of political mischief; it would favour the

unbridled rule of the majority, the relentless crushing out of minorities and, as its most salient expression, party despotism. The general ticket must be supplied with a corrective. This latter is ready at hand in the form of proportional representation. The not quite satisfactory experience furnished in this respect by the States of Illinois and Pennsylvania, where the system has been tried, is not conclusive at all, for they chose the crudest methods of minority representation — the cumulative vote and the limited vote. More perfect systems have been adopted in several European countries. The analysis of those systems, of their comparative merits and defects, would be out of place here. To hit upon a practical plan of proportional representation which could be adopted in the United States would certainly demand some constructive statesmanship, but it is not an impossible task. I would only add, in the light of experience, that in establishing such a system attention should be paid to three conditions which it must satisfy: (1) it must be simple enough to be handled without difficulty by the average voter; (2) but it must not be reduced to cut and dried arrangements or deals between parties which take the life out of political competitions and struggles necessary not only for attaining political ends but also for carrying on the political education of the electorate; (3) and last, but not least, the system of proportional representation adopted must not be such as to fortify political parties, to entrench them in their positions irrespective of their principles.

with proportional representation.

Preferential vote.

221. One of the earliest and probably the greatest of the systems of proportional representation, that proposed by Thomas Hare and expounded by a more illus-

trious man, John Stuart Mill, contains an important point which may be applied separately under any of the present systems of majority representation. That is the preferential vote, or, as it is often called, the second choice. The voter may return but one member, but he is free to put on his ballot the names of several candidates in order of preference, one man as his first, another as his second, another as his third choice. If none of the candidates of the first choice has polled a majority of votes, the votes given to the one heading the poll as second choice are added. If in spite of that he has still a deficit, the next first choice is taken into account with his subsidiary votes as second choice, and so on. I have advocated the preferential vote at the preliminary polls (minus the operation of the transfer of votes not needed at that stage). It would there be of great assistance in offering voters hints and directions for the actual election. At this last the preferential and transferable vote would consummate the emancipation of the electors from the Hobson's choice of regular candidates and effect the concentration of votes as a result of a wide, free, and deliberate selection. At the same time the elected candidate would be the choice of a majority of the voters and no longer of a minority, as occurs frequently under the existing régime, which must by necessity content itself with a "plurality."

On the other hand, the preferential vote would serve as a lever for elevating political manners. It would lead even the most party-ridden elector to compare, to judge, to marshal the various shades of opinion and the merits of the men. As the second or third choices of the

elector, to be effective, would have to fall on candidates of more or less different complexion to his own, the system of preferences would widen his horizon and counteract blind sectarian intolerance and narrow cliquish exclusiveness. Candidates, in their turn, having to conciliate electors whose opinions do not tally with their own, to get their subsidiary votes, must conduct their campaigns with more moderation and decency. Their moderation need have nothing in common with the opportunism and the fence-riding practised nowadays by so many candidates who try to please everybody: to succeed, a candidate will always have to be put in the first line by a considerable number of electors; and he cannot become their choice unless he inspires them with implicit confidence, which he will not by equivocal declarations and ambiguous attitudes. The top line or first choice votes will come from the militant party men, who will have to be spoken to plainly; on the other hand, to obtain the subsidiary votes of other groups of electors, the candidate will be equally obliged to state frankly how far the agreement between him and them extends, and his best policy will be honesty to everybody.

Changes in the organization of the Executive.

The Presidency.

222. The organization of the public powers requires not less urgently some important changes. To begin with the Executive power in the Federal government. The President of the United States must be set free from his bondage to the senatorial bosses. The consent of the Senate to presidential nominations must be done away with; the President must be given the power enjoyed under the new municipal plans by a mayor of a city, to appoint to offices in his own right and under

his own responsibility. The rescue of the Federal service from politics must be completed by submitting it to no influence but that of the Chief Executive and his principal officers throughout the country, and to no end but that of the public weal. (Not only from the bosses at Washington must the President be emancipated, but from the party Machine altogether.) And that cannot be achieved so long as the President looks for re-election. The Presidential term should be lengthened to seven years, and the re-election of the President prohibited.

Cabinet ministers in Congress.

The chief executive officers, the members of the Cabinet as they are called, should be given free access to both Houses of Congress and to their committees to furnish information and to advocate the Administration measures. The isolation of the executive from the legislative power would thus give way to a frank co-operation which would the better respect the constitutional separation between them. Members of the House would be cemented through that new association more effectually than through the coarse despotism of the chair and of the gang gathered round it. Parliamentary leadership would evolve more worthy of the name than the miserable counterfeit supplied by the Congressional caucus and the House oligarchy.

Reform of the United States Senate.

223. The reform of the United States Senate has been long clamoured for. The election of Senators should certainly be conferred on the people themselves, but not on the whole mass from the age of twenty-one onwards. The Senate, which should represent the mature thought of the country, ought to be elected by voters who have reached the age of experience, say not

less than thirty-five years. With this limitation the Senators would still be selected by not fewer than ten millions of citizens.

The new mode of election of the United States Senate would not alone suffice to bring about the infusion of new and purer blood of which it is in so great need. The part which that high assembly has to play differs greatly from the one the Fathers assigned to it in the economy of the American political existence. The chief purpose they attributed to the Senate, along with that of serving as a check on popular mutability and impulsiveness, was to represent and to co-ordinate the great units of which the Union was made up — the several commonwealths. This end became almost objectless with the obliteration of State lines. New forces, numerous and complex, arose which filled up the gap between the citizen and the supreme government of the country, social and economic forces. They needed co-ordination more urgently even than the great political entities of old. The United States Senate, as created by the Fathers, was the instrument for equalizing the power of the States, large and small, powerful and weak. The new social and economic conditions brought about antinomies still more flagrant and of not less marked material shape. It came to pass that the strongest, the most rapacious of the new forces — but only they — found their way into the Senate, entrenched themselves there. The Senate became representative of the great economic forces, but a very one-sided and therefore a very selfish representative. The weaker economic forces, unlike the small States, have no standing at all in that assembly, which has become in the

course of political evolution the most exalted and powerful constitutional body and consequently the supreme arbiter between the conflicting forces in the community. Conflicts are getting more and more bitter, clouds are gathering thick in the social sky, and it is on the arbitraments of the Senate that social peace will depend. But how can fair judgment be secured if the representation of economic interests in the Senate is not made broader? And how can such a representation be established?

Associate Senators.

224. I think it could be done, and without breaking the old framework of the Senate. Its basis should remain unchanged, every State, large and small, keeping its two representatives in the high Federal chamber. But to these Senators should be added Associate Senators representing directly and specially the great social and economic forces of the country — chambers of commerce, boards of trade, manufacturers' associations, trades-unions, granges, churches, — not as ecclesiastical but as great social organizations, — universities, bar associations, etc. Every great national interest would have its legitimate spokesman in the high assembly, and their knowledge of the special conditions with which they are connected would bring these latter to light before the Senate and the country. The co-ordination of struggling economic forces, so far as it depends on legislation, would be promoted in a spirit of fairness. The Trusts themselves could plead their cause, they would only be challenged to come out in the open instead of working out their ends underhand as now. Organized labour too should have the opportunity and obligation of stating and of proving its case.

The Associate Senators would be, above all, the authoritative experts on the great social and economic problems of the age. To prevent them losing this character, and to preclude the creation of a new breed of politicians, or, at all events, of a class of political mandarins, it would be well to limit the duration of their mandate to the discussion of a single budget. Such a measure would, moreover, facilitate the rotation which it would be necessary to establish between the different sections of the country, for appointing special representatives in turns, as the number of seats that might be reserved for them in the Senate would not allow, for instance, trades-unions of every industry and of every region to be all represented at the same time. Of course the Associate Senators while sitting in the Senate should enjoy exactly the same privileges as the Senators representing the States. Their number could be fixed at one fourth, or even at one third, of the old membership, but not more. The historic foundation of the Senate would be preserved, not only as a memory of times contemporaneous with the birth and growth of the Union, but as an actual basis of the structure harmoniously blended with the additional building answering the call of the age and the wants of an ever-developing democracy.

Duty of the American democracy.

225. The most sanguine reformer will certainly not expect that changes such as those proposed in the political methods as well as in the legal organization could be soon carried out. Any change in the political structure and social habits, even if not hedged by a written constitution like the American, requires the assistance of time. But that is no reason for giving up

the idea of reform and its advocacy or for making light of it. The eternal striving towards improvement, the "holy discontent," as the poet puts it, with actual conditions is the source of life for a progressive community. The direction of the path of progress has to be rightly discerned, the feasible has to be distinguished from the utopian, but the magnitude of the task should never be a plea for its abandonment. It is rather only an additional reason for arduous work. The result as expressed by the achievement of the reforms aimed at may be far and distant, but the agitating of great problems of public welfare, their discussion alone, is a great practical result; it generates the motive power of a free community — public spirit. For securing a continual flow of this spirit the machinery of institutions, even of the freest, is not sufficient. In the process of their working, public spirit is rather apt to slacken. In a democracy, nay especially in a democracy, the citizen is like a factory hand who, lulled to sleep by the regular play of the engine, drops insensibly the crank and lets the machine run at random. To keep the citizen up to the mark, to keep him awake, the cry of social want, the voice of political discussion fed by political thought, must ring always in his ears. The problems examined here ought, therefore, to be steadily before the American democracy. By ceaseless investigating and sifting them the way will be prepared for the advent of the real "manifest destiny" of the United States as a lasting abode of human freedom, and the Americans will pay the debt they owe to themselves and to humanity.

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SUGGESTIONS for advanced students on the subject of this book will be found in the author's larger work *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties*, Vol. II, which is provided with numerous references in the footnotes. The titles of some of the books and articles mentioned there, with the addition of a few others, are also given here, for the convenience of the reader, without any pretension, however, to supplying a full or a systematic bibliography of the subject. There are very few monographs on the questions dealt with in the present book, and the information relating to most of them is scattered throughout general works on American history and politics and in innumerable files of periodicals and official documents.

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